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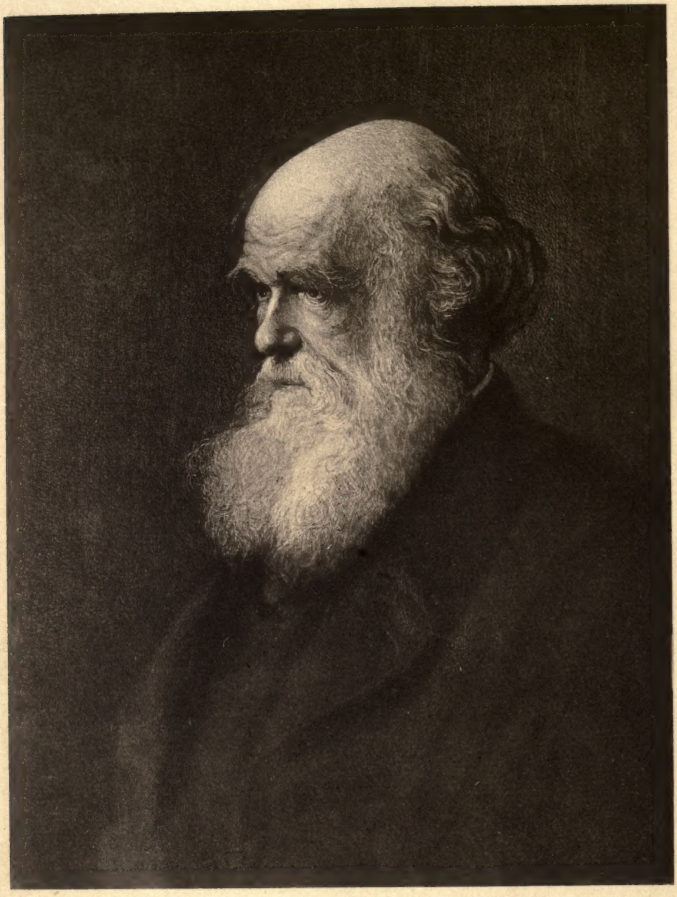
A CENTURY OF EMPIRE

1801–1900

VOL. III



Charles Robert Darwin.

From the painting by W. W. Ouless, R.A.

LONDON: EDWARD ARNOLD.

A CENTURY OF EMPIRE

1801–1900

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SIR HERBERT MAXWELL, BART.

F.R.S., D.C.L., LL.D.

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IN THREE VOLUMES

VOL. III. 1869–1900

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LONDON

EDWARD ARNOLD

1911

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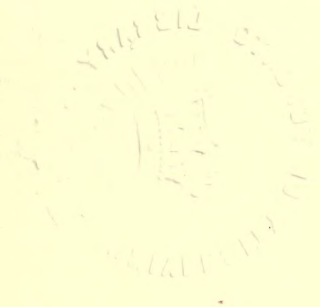

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PREFACE TO VOL. III

In preparing the third and last volume of this historical sketch I have not been regardless of the criticism passed upon its predecessors by the periodical press. For the general leniency of that criticism I cannot but feel grateful; in so far as it has been unfavourable, I accept it as salutary. Adverse comment has been chiefly directed upon three points—first, the omission or inadequate treatment of certain developments in the social condition of the people; second, the brevity with which the genesis and growth of the British colonies have been described; and third, the degree in which the author has allowed the narrative to be tinged with the predilection or prejudice of a Conservative in politics.

With regard to the first point, I fully recognise the justice of the complaint, and am poignantly conscious of the imperfection with which my design has been accomplished of ranging for review the salient points in the progress of the Empire and its citizens during the period dealt with. In the preface to the first volume I expressed some misgiving as to the possibility of compressing within moderate limits the review of a century so crowded with events, so sweeping in its changes, so wonder-stirring in its progress. To avoid *lacunæ* in such a narrative, the six volumes which Carlyle devoted to the reign of a single monarch, or the ten volumes which Alison required for the history of twenty years, would scarcely suffice. It is only writers of the first order who may dare to invite attention upon such a spacious scale; men of less account and ability must study attractive brevity.

The same excuse has to be offered to critics upon the second point. The expansion of those sister dominions (which it seems a caricature of phrase to continue to term

colonies) has been so vast, they have received and exercise independence in so signal a degree, that any attempt to trace their growth step by step must have carried the present work far beyond its modest limits. It has been in recognition, not in disregard or ignorance, of the dignity and individual power to which they have attained that I have refrained from giving more than the outlines of a sketch.

As to the third point dwelt upon by my critics, I have somewhat more to submit in defence. No human being presuming to write upon modern politics can be reasonably expected to divest himself of his personal views. Did he succeed in doing so, either those views must be lightly held, devoid of conviction, therefore unworthy of attention; or else he must be guilty of insincerity in withholding them in order to avoid giving offence. When it is considered that the history of Great Britain during the nineteenth century has been left hitherto to be dealt with almost exclusively by Liberal or Radical writers, there is surely some indulgence due to one who has honestly attempted to present the facts, and the motives underlying them, as they appear to a Conservative. Harriet Martineau, J. R. Green, Sir Spencer Walpole, among the departed; Mr. Justin M'Carthy and Mr. Herbert Paul, among those whom we rejoice to have still with us, have not shrunk from frank expression of their political sympathies or refrained from expressing vigorous disapproval of men and measures with whom and with which they were not in accord. Is a Conservative to be blamed for availing himself of that freedom which they have put to such effective purpose? There can be no question with less than two sides to it; future searchers after truth will hardly be satisfied without a report on disputed points from both these sides.

HERBERT MAXWELL.

MONREITH, *March* 1911.

CONTENTS

CHAPTER I (*Pages 1–23*)

Charles Darwin 1809–1882
Essays and Reviews . . . . . Feb. 1860
Bishop Colenso and the Pentateuch 1862
Benjamin Disraeli 1804–1881
His first Administration . . . . . Feb. 1868–Dec. 1869
Resignation of his Government . . . . . 1st Dec. 1869
Mr. Gladstone's first Administration . . . . Dec. 1868–Feb. 1874
Disestablishment of the Irish Church 1869
The Queen and the Bill 1869
Lord Salisbury on the Constitutional Question 1868
Renewed Disorder in Ireland 1869–1870
The Irish Land Question 1845–1870
The Irish Land Bill 1870

CHAPTER II (*Pages 24–44*)

National Education 1839–1872
Scottish Education Act 1872
The vacant Throne of Spain 1870
France declares War against Prussia . . . . . 15th July 1870
The Russian Note . . . . . 31st Oct. 1870
Odo Russell's Mission to Bismarck . . . . . 21st Nov. 1870
The London Conference . . . . . Dec. 1870–Mar. 1871
Edward Cardwell 1813–1886
Abolition of Army Purchase 1871
Gladstone's *coup d'état* . . . . . 18th July 1871
Irish University Bill . . . . . Feb. 1873
Resignation of the Ministry . . . . . 13th Mar. 1873
Gladstone resumes Office . . . . . 19th Mar. 1873
Disraeli's second Administration 1874–1880
Expedition to Ashanti 1873–1874

CHAPTER III (*Pages 45–70*)

Commercial Prosperity 1872–1876
Abolition of Lay-patronage in Scotland 1874
Purchase of Suez Canal Shares . . . . . 25th Nov. 1875
The Royal Titles Act 1876

Recrudescence of the Eastern Question 1875–1876
Disraeli receives a Peerage . . . . . 12th Aug. 1876
Gladstone and the Bulgarian Atrocities. 1876
The Constantinople Conference . . . . . Dec. 1876–Jan. 1877
Russia declares War against Turkey . . . . . 24th April 1877
Northcote takes a Vote of Credit . . . . . Jan. 1878
Treaty of San Stefano . . . . . 3rd Mar. 1878
The Berlin Congress . . . . . 13th June 1878
Cyprus placed under British Administration . . . . 4th July 1878
The Secession of Lords Carnarvon and Derby 1878
Failure of the City of Glasgow Bank 1878
Agricultural Depression 1876–1900
First Midlothian Campaign . . . . . Nov.–Dec. 1879
Dissolution and Defeat of the Ministry . . . . . Mar. 1880

CHAPTER IV (*Pages 71–96*)

War with Afghanistan 1878–1880
Treaty of Gundamuk . . . . . 26th May 1879
Massacre of Sir Louis Cavagnari and escort . . . . 3rd Sept. 1879
Action of Charasiab . . . . . 6th Oct. 1879
And of Sherpur . . . . . 23rd Dec. 1879
British Disaster at Maiwand . . . . . 27th July 1880
Roberts's March from Cabul to Candahar . . . 9th–31st Aug. 1880
"The Great Trek" 1834–1837
Natal proclaimed a British Colony . . . . . 8th Aug. 1843
Annexation of the Orange River Territory . . . . 3rd Feb. 1848
Dutch African Republic founded 1848
Annexation of the Transvaal . . . . . 12th April 1877
Sir Bartle Frere 1815–1884
Invasion of Zululand . . . . . 11th Jan. 1879
Massacre of Isandhlana . . . . . 22nd Jan. 1879
Defeat of the Zulus at Ulundi . . . . . 4th July 1879
Affairs of the Transvaal . . . . . May 1880
Revolt of the Boers . . . . . Dec. 1880
British Reverse at Laing's Nek . . . . . 28th Jan. 1881
Disaster of Majuba . . . . . 27th Feb. 1881
Convention of Pretoria . . . . . Aug. 1881

CHAPTER V (*Pages 97–124*)

Muhammad Ali 1769–1849
Massacre of the Mamlûks . . . . . 1st Mar. 1811
Bombardment of Acre . . . . . 3rd Nov. 1840
Insolvency of the Egyptian Government 1876
Institution of the Dual Control 1876
Deposition of Khedive Ismail . . . . . 26th June 1879
The Joint Note . . . . . 8th Jan. 1882
Arábi's Revolution . . . . . 11th June 1882
Bombardment of Alexandria . . . . . 11th July 1882

Resignation of John Bright	12th July 1882
Battle of Tel-el-Kebir	13th Sept. 1828
Lord Granville's Circular to the Powers	3rd Jan. 1883
Lord Dufferin's Mission	Nov. 1882–Feb. 1883
Sir E. Baring (Lord Cromer) appointed Consul-General	Aug. 1883
Revolt of the Soudan	1882–1883
Destruction of Hicks Pasha's Army	1st–4th Nov. 1883
Defeat of Baker Pasha at Tokar	4th Feb. 1884
General Gordon sent to Khartum	18th Jan. 1884
Battle of El Teb	29th Feb. 1884
And of Tamai	13th Mar. 1884
The Relief Expedition	Sept. 1884
Action of Abu Klea	17th Jan. 1885
Fall of Khartum and Death of Gordon	26th Jan. 1885
Motion of Censure upon Ministers	Feb. 1885
Government determines to "smash the Mahdi"	Feb. 1885
Russian Aggression upon Afghanistan	1884–1885
Decision to abandon the Soudan	April 1885
Vote of Credit for £11,000,000	26th April 1885
Pacific Settlement with Russia	April 1885
The Financial Redemption of Egypt	1885–1910

CHAPTER VI (*Pages 125–151*)

Death of Lord Beaconsfield	19th April 1881
Sir Stafford Northcote	1818–1887
Charles Bradlaugh and the Oath	1880–1885
Defeat of the Government	22nd June 1880
"The Fourth Party"	1880–1884
The Home Rule Movement	1880
Charles Stewart Parnell	1846–1891
Parliamentary Obstruction	1877–1884
Adoption of the Closure	Mar. 1882
Institution of "Boycotting"	19th Sept. 1880
Compensation for Disturbance Bill (Ireland)	June 1880
Irish Coercion Act	1881
Irish Land Act	1881
Imprisonment of Parnell	13th Oct. 1881
Release of Parnell and other "Suspects"	2nd May 1882
The Phœnix Park Murders	6th May 1882
Breach of the Kilmainham Treaty	1882
The Dynamite Campaign	1882–1885
Execution of the Phœnix Park Murderers	1883
The Ground Game Act	1880
Employers Liability Acts	1880–1896
Representation of the People Bill	1884
Break-up of the Fourth Party	1884
The Bill rejected by the Lords	8th July 1884
The Queen's Interposition	Oct. 1884
Friendly Conferences upon Redistribution	Nov. 1884
The Franchise Bill passed	6th Dec. 1884

CHAPTER VII (*Pages 152–174*)

Split in the Cabinet . . . . . Feb. 1885
Confusion of the Opposition . . . . . Feb. 1885
Fall of the Government . . . . . 8th June 1885
Mr. Gladstone resigns . . . . . 9th June 1885
The "Cabinet of Caretakers" . . . . 23rd June 1885–26th Jan. 1886
Was there a Tory-Parnellite Compact? 1885
Lord Carnarvon's Dealings with Parnell . . . . . July 1885
Lord Ashbourne's Land Purchase Act 1885
Third Midlothian Campaign . . . . . Nov. 1885
Gladstone is converted to Home Rule . . . . . 16th Dec. 1885
Lord Carnarvon resigns . . . . . 10th Dec. 1885
The new Parliament meets . . . . . 12th Jan. 1886
Defeat and Resignation of Government . . . . 25th–26th Jan. 1886
Gladstone's third Administration . . . . 1st Feb.–8th June 1886
Mr. Chamberlain and Mr. Trevelyan resign . . . . 26th Mar. 1886
The First Home Rule Bill . . . . . 8th April–7th June 1886
Defeat of the Government . . . . . 8th June 1886

CHAPTER VIII (*Pages 175–197*)

Formation of Liberal-Unionist Party . . . . . 14th April 1886
Dissolution of Parliament . . . . . 26th June 1886
Lord Salisbury's second Administration . 21st July 1886–10th Aug. 1892
Resignation of Lord R. Churchill . . . . . 20th Dec. 1886
Death of Lord Iddesleigh . . . . . 12th Jan. 1887
The Plan of Campaign . . . . . Sept. 1886
Criminal Law Amendment Act . . . . . Mar. 1887
Irish Land Act . . . . . Mar. 1887
The Round Table Conference . . . . . Jan.–Feb. 1887
The Guillotine Resolution . . . . . 10th June 1887
"Parnellism and Crime" 1887
The Parnell Commission . . . . 17th Sept. 1888–22nd Nov. 1889
Pigott's Flight and Suicide . . . . . 1st Mar. 1889
Report of the Commission . . . . . 13th Feb. 1890
Queen Victoria's Jubilee . . . . . 21st June 1887
The first Colonial Conference . . . . . April 1887

CHAPTER IX (*Pages 198–224*)

Local Government Act 1888
Impaired Prestige of the Ministry 1890
Fall of Parnell 1890
His Death . . . . . 6th Oct. 1891
Irish Land Purchase Act 1891
Death of W. H. Smith . . . . . 6th Oct. 1891
And of Charles Bradlaugh . . . . . 30th Jan. 1891
Free Education 1891

Death of the Duke of Clarence . . . . . 14th Jan. 1892
Dissolution of Parliament . . . . . 26th June 1892
Mr. Gladstone's fourth Administration . . 12th Aug. 1892–1st Mar. 1894
The second Home Rule Bill 1893
Loss of H.M.S. *Victoria* . . . . . 22nd June 1893
Retirement of Mr. Gladstone . . . . . 2nd Mar. 1894
Lord Rosebery becomes Prime Minister . . . .
The Death Duties 1894
Defeat and resignation of Ministers . . . . . 21st Jan. 1895
Death of Lord Randolph Churchill . . . . . 24th Jan. 1895

CHAPTER X (*Pages 225–258*)

Lord Salisbury's third Administration . . . . . June 1895
Sir John Gorst and the Education Bill 1895
The Venezuela Boundary dispute 1895–1897
Arbitration Treaty with the United States 1897
New South Wales colonised 1788
Foundation of Sheep-farming in Australia 1805
Victoria proclaimed a Colony 1851
South Australia proclaimed a Colony 1836
Queensland proclaimed a Colony 1859
Tasmania proclaimed a Colony 1825
Settlement of West Australia 1825–1827
Annexation of New Zealand 1840
War with the Maoris 1860–1869
Cape Colony ceded to Great Britain 1815
Wars with the Kaffres . 1811, 1818–1819, 1834–1835, 1846–1848, 1850–1853
Discovery of Diamonds 1869
Cecil John Rhodes 1853–1902
Annexation of Bechuanaland . . . . . 12th Mar. 1884
Opening of the Rand Goldfield 1886
Lo Bengula's Concession . . . . . 30th Oct. 1888
Germany in South Africa 1842–1885
German Annexation of Angra-Pequena 1883
British Annexation of Mashonaland . . . . . 11th Sept. 1890
First Matabele War . . . . . Oct. 1893
Acquisition of Matabele Land 1894
Foundation of Rhodesia 1895
Sir William Mackinnon 1823–1893
The British East African Company 1888–1895

CHAPTER XI (*Pages 259–291*)

Affairs in the Transvaal 1895
The Jameson Raid . . . . . 28th Dec. 1895–2nd Jan. 1896
Parliamentary Inquiry into the Raid 1896–1897
Reconquest of the Soudan 1895–1899
Occupation of Dongola . . . . . 23rd Sept. 1896
Operations on the Atbara . . . . . April 1898

Battle of Omdurman	2nd Sept. 1898
The Nile Barrage	10th Dec. 1902
The Diamond Jubilee	June 1897
The second Colonial Conference	1897
Development of Locomotion	1801–1900
John Loudon M'Adam	1756–1836
The Railway Movement	1830–1900
Bicycling	1870–1900
Motor Traffic	1896–1900
The Channel Tunnel Scheme	1882–1887
Steam Navigation	1802–1900
Graham Bell invents the Telephone	1878
Edison's Phonograph	...
Wireless Telegraphy established	1899
Modern Illuminants	1803–1900
Photography	1802–1900
Architecture in the Nineteenth Century	...
Literature	...
Modern Journalism	1801–1900
Modern Surgery	...
Vaccination	1798–1900

CHAPTER XII (*Pages 292–315*)

The Convention of London	1884
The Bloemfontein Conference	31st May–6th June 1899
Warlike Preparation in the Transvaal	July–Oct. 1899
The Boers invade Natal	12th Oct. 1899
Action at Glencoe	20th Oct. 1899
And at Elandslaagte	21st Oct. 1899
Surrender at Nicholson's Nek	30th Oct. 1899
Siege of Ladysmith	31st Oct. 1899
Faulty Strategy of Cronje and Botha	Oct. 1899
Battle of Belmont	23rd Nov. 1899
Battle of Magersfontein	11th Dec. 1899
Gatacre's Reverse at Stormberg	10th Dec. 1899
Battle of Colenso	15th Dec. 1899

CHAPTER XIII (*Pages 316–344*)

Lord Roberts appointed to the Chief Command	Dec. 1899
Second Attempt to relieve Ladysmith	9th–24th Jan. 1900
Battle of Spion Kop	23rd Jan. 1900
Third Attempt to relieve Ladysmith	5th Feb. 1900
Final Advance on Ladysmith	12th–27th Feb. 1900
Relief of Ladysmith	28th Feb. 1900
Relief of Kimberley	15th Feb. 1900
Battle of Paardeberg	18th–27th Feb. 1900
Surrender of General Cronje	27th Feb. 1900

Capture of Bloemfontein . . . . . 13th Mar. 1900
Relief of Mafeking . . . . . 17th May 1900
Annexation of Orange State . . . . . 24th May 1900
Spragge's Yeomanry surrender at Lindley . . . . 1st June 1900
Surrender of Pretoria . . . . . 5th June 1900
Buller drives the Boers out of Natal . . . . . June 1900
Annexation of the Transvaal . . . . . 1st Sept. 1900
Conclusion of the War . . . . . 16th May 1902
Queen Victoria visits Ireland . . . . . 3rd April 1900
Her last Acts of State . . . . . Jan. 1901
Her Death . . . . . 22nd Jan. 1901

INDEX . . . . . *Pages* 345–364

CORRIGENDA FOR VOLS. I. AND II. . . . . „ 365–367

LIST OF PLATES

CHARLES ROBERT DARWIN . . . . . *Frontispiece*
From the Painting by W. W. OULESS, R.A.

BENJAMIN DISRAELI, EARL OF BEACONSFIELD . *Facing page* 52

JOHN BRIGHT . . . . . „ „ 104
From the Painting by W. W. OULESS, R.A.

CHARLES STEWART PARNELL . . . . . „ „ 140
From the Cartoon in "Vanity Fair."

WILLIAM EWART GLADSTONE . . . . . „ „ 168
From the Painting by Sir JOHN MILLAIS, P.R.A.

ROBERT CECIL, MARQUESS OF SALISBURY . . „ „ 190
From the Painting by G. F. WATTS, R.A.

A CENTURY OF EMPIRE

1801–1900

CHAPTER I

Charles Darwin—*Essays and Reviews*—Bishop Colenso and the Pentateuch—Benjamin Disraeli—His first Administration—Resignation of his Government—Mr. Gladstone's first Administration—Disestablishment of the Irish Church—The Queen and the Bill—Lord Salisbury on the Constitutional Question—Renewed disorder in Ireland—The Irish Land Question—The Irish Land Bill.

By the Toleration Act of 1689 (1 Will. III. c. 18) the Church of England was deprived of the compulsory powers which she had exercised ever since the days of the Lollards. Heresy ceased to be an indictable offence in a layman, and every man who acknowledged the Trinity[1] was set free to worship his Creator after what fashion he chose, or to abstain from worshipping, subject always to certain political disabilities attaching to nonconformity, and to the common law of England, which still treats blasphemy as an indictable offence.[2] Thus disarmed, the Church during the eighteenth century was overtaken by spiritual lassitude; her clergy ranging themselves as High or Low Churchmen according to their political rather than their religious tenets. Her critics, not all of them unfriendly, found her parallel in the Church of the Laodiceans, "rich and increased with goods," but "lukewarm, and neither cold nor hot." Doubtless she produced many erudite and eloquent divines, was served quietly by many diligent pastors, and contained thousands of truly religious worshippers; but, failing as an organisation to respond to

[1] Persons denying the Trinity were excluded from the benefits of this Act.

[2] The Court of Exchequer in 1867 reaffirmed the principle that Christianity was part of the law of England.

the earnest appeals of Whitefield and the two Wesleys, she shut her doors against them and suffered a vast secession from her fold in the formation of the Methodist sect.

The shock of severance roused the general body of English clergy from their torpor. The Church Missionary Society was founded in 1799 for the conversion of the heathen; Sunday schools were formed, and the Church resumed her functions as an educational agency by establishing, or assisting to establish, schools in every parish in England. This revival of activity was distinctly evangelical in character; but a Church which recognises the right of private judgment must make provision for great latitude of opinion, and it was not until the Tractarians, about 1838, claimed explicit recognition of the sacerdotal office that the last traces of eighteenth-century lethargy were dispelled.[1] Since that time much valuable energy has been squandered in controversy about ritual, threatening fresh rupture; but whatever opinion may be held about the wisdom of parties to the strife, no longer may the beneficed clergy of the Church of England be charged, as a body, with lack of zeal, earnestness, or industry.

While Protestant Christianity in the United Kingdom was passing through these phases, students of natural science had been quietly pursuing a very different course. Intent upon a common aim—the discovery of truth—they were unanimous about the only means of attaining it, namely, those prescribed by Roger Bacon six hundred years before, when he denounced the vanity of scholastic disputation and declared that no advancement in knowledge was to be had save by way of cautious induction and patient experiment.[2] This Roger, the first articulate English free-thinker, found no hearers save ecclesiastics, who, hearing, summarily condemned his teaching as *quasdam*

[1] See vol. ii. pp. 101–107.

[2] "But besides all these branches of learning [geometry, optics, chemistry, philology, mathematics, &c.] there is one more excellent than all of them, upon which they all must wait, and which proves them all in a wonderful manner; and this is called experimental science, which disregards disputations, for they prove nothing however forcible they be, unless the conclusions also are submitted to experiment. . . . Only by experiment can proof be obtained in these matters, and not by disputation."—*Opus tertium*, c. xiii.

novitates suspectas, and took measures to prevent him either acquiring or communicating knowledge during what ought to have been the most fruitful years of his life. He was kept in close confinement in Paris for ten years (1357–67). It was reserved for another Bacon—Francis of Verulam—with the harvest of three intervening centuries of learning and civilisation, to gain world-wide audience for the self-same principles that Roger the Franciscan had proclaimed to ears that would not hear.

And so, while the round world rolled along, while empires grew or fell asunder, while the thrones of Europe were rocking, crumbling, or crashing down, while the general race of men continued intent upon conquest, wealth, or bare means of subsistence, a handful of penetrating intellects went forward on Roger Bacon's lines, adding steadily, but without much outward stir, to the horizon of knowledge, till at last they found themselves mining the outworks of orthodoxy.

It was with no polemic intent that, in 1859, Charles Darwin produced his great work on the *Origin of Species*.[1] He was as innocent of hostility to any religious creed or system as Galileo was when he published his famous *Dialogo;* but not less surely than Galileo incurred the wrath of the Inquisition did this gentle naturalist bring upon himself the censure of English Church authorities. Howbeit, orthodoxy had been stinted of the arms wielded by the Inquisitors of the seventeenth century. Galileo renounced his doctrine under threat of torture: Darwin might only be vanquished by bringing his theory into contempt and discredit, could that be done. The pen, the pulpit, and the platform were the nineteenth-century substitutes for the rack, the thumb-screw, and the stake; and it was with all three that Samuel Wilberforce, Bishop of Oxford, undertook to champion orthodoxy against the apostle of natural selection. His onslaught was undaunted; in the pages of the *Quarterly Review* he lashed his opponent with no sparing hand.[2] Ranging himself among those who

Charles Darwin, 1809–1882.

[1] The whole edition of 1250 copies was sold on the day of publication, 24th November 1859.

[2] *Quarterly Review*, July 1860.

were "too loyal pupils of inductive philosophy to start back from any conclusion by reason of its strangeness," he proceeded to condemn Darwin's "utterly rotten fabric of guess and speculation" as "most dishonourable and injurious to science."

He did not shrink from declaring Darwin's conclusions to be contrary to the Christian verity.

"Now, we must say at once, and openly, that such a notion [the action of natural selection upon the human race] is absolutely incompatible, not only with single expressions in the word of God on that subject of natural science with which it is not immediately concerned, but, which in our judgment is of far more importance, with the whole representation of that moral and spiritual condition of man which is its proper subject-matter. Man's derived supremacy over the earth; man's power of articulate speech; man's gift of reason; man's free-will and responsibility; man's fall and man's redemption; the incarnation of the Eternal Son; the indwelling of the Eternal Spirit—all are equally and utterly irreconcilable with the degrading notion of the brute origin of him who was created in the image of God, and redeemed by the Eternal Son assuming to himself his nature."

This article, being anonymous, of course cannot be cited as the authoritative pronouncement of the Church of England, though it expressed pretty accurately the teaching of the Church at that time and the belief of the average Protestant Englishman. Unfortunately for his cause, the bishop was not content with merely defensive polemics; he sallied from his fortress to give battle to Darwin upon his own ground, where the ready-witted, fluent amateur, although backed and "coached" by Professor Richard Owen (the one eminent man of science who refused to entertain Darwin's theories),[1] was hopelessly outmatched by the patient student who had laid his foundations so broad and deep.

Nor did the champion of orthodoxy fare better on the platform. The British Association held its meeting in Oxford in 1860, and the intrepid prelate made use of the occasion to hold up the evolutionist to contempt before the assembled representatives of natural science. Descending to personalities, he laid himself open to a damaging counter-

[1] He had already attacked the *Origin of Species* in the *Quarterly Review*, April 1860.

stroke from Professor Huxley, a fiery controversialist, who told him plainly that he would do well to confine himself to his proper sphere of activity and not plunge into scientific questions with which he had no real acquaintance.

In this matter the conflict between dogma and reason was brief, and ended, as such conflicts have done hitherto late or soon, in a modification of the Church's teaching upon the literal interpretation of Holy Writ; on this occasion, specially, as regarded the Mosaic cosmogony. Of all the English writers of the nineteenth century, none has had such a profound and lasting influence upon human understanding and modern philosophy as Charles Darwin. The doctrines of evolution, heredity and variation, were not originally conceived by him; their outlines may be recognised in the writings of Aristotle and other Greek philosophers, and many naturalists in modern times had elaborated the idea; but Darwin had the good fortune to have at his disposal all that modern geologists had brought to light, and he owed the *general* acceptance of his theory by the leading biologists of all nations to his success in showing that the phenomena of heredity and variation were demonstrable by experiment. This is no place for discussing the accuracy of all his conclusions or inquiring whether the theories of natural selection and survival of the fittest are capable of carrying all that he and succeeding biologists have laid upon them. There is no finality in science, and Darwin's discoveries have opened out the way to still more elusive problems underlying them; but the stable fact remains that to Darwin's labour must be attributed a complete revolution in the popular, as well as the scientific apprehension of the processes and phenomena of animal and plant life, and the surrender by our spiritual instructors of what had previously been taught as an article of faith, namely, the literal acceptation of the synthetic biblical account of the creation. For no poet, divine, or philosopher of the nineteenth century can it be claimed that he has wrought so important a change.

Nevertheless, Darwin's discoveries might have caused little stir outside strictly scientific circles, had not many minds in Western Europe been set on the alert by the

rapid advance in stratigraphic geology, with its irresistible evidence upon the antiquity of the earth and of life thereon. Lyell and Murchison had brought the conclusions of the catastrophic and diluvial schools into discredit, demanding extension of the Mosaic "days" into almost incalculable æons. In vain were anxious mothers at pains to exclude from their schoolrooms literature that they regarded as dangerously subversive of faith; young imaginations were powerfully stirred, and the curiosity of boys was whetted by woodcuts and descriptions of strange creatures exhumed from the rocks. Adult intellects could not remain indifferent to the growth of knowledge. Earnest, thoughtful clergymen—the more thoughtful the more earnest—recoiled from attempting to call upon their people to accept what was contrary to the evidence of their own senses and the monition of their own reason. Hence it came to pass that, within a few months of the Oxford meeting, Bishop Wilberforce complied with Huxley's advice by directing his censure upon persons within "his proper sphere of activity." Soon after the publication of the *Origin of Species*, so soon that it was evidently independent of that work, there appeared a volume of *Essays and Reviews*, consisting of seven papers contributed by as many different writers, of whom six were clergymen of the Church of England, whose object it was to bridge the widening gulf between Christian doctrine and modern science.[1] Too honest to ignore the impossibility of reconciling certain statements in Holy Writ with actual chronology or to conceal their dissatisfaction with the evidence in support of miracles, they claimed release from the obligation to profess and inculcate belief in what was irreconcilable with reason and unessential either to morals or salvation. In all this they were only giving expression to thoughts that were seething in the minds of thousands of Christians who would fain remain faithful if they could.

Essays and Reviews, Feb. 1860.

[1] The writers were: 1. Dr. F. Temple, Headmaster of Rugby, afterwards Archbishop of Canterbury. 2. Dr. Rowland Williams, Vice-Principal of Lampeter College. 3. Baden Powell, Savilian Professor of Geometry, Oxford. 4. H. B. Wilson, Vicar of Great Staughton. 5. C. W. Goodwin, brother of the Bishop of Carlisle. 6. Mark Pattison, afterwards Rector of Lincoln College, Oxford. 7. Benjamin Jowett, Regius Professor of Greek at Oxford afterwards Master of Balliol.

Once more Bishop Wilberforce stood forth as the champion of literal inspiration, contributing another article to the *Quarterly Review*, in which he declared that "infidelity, if not atheism, is the end to which this teaching inevitably tends," and protesting against raising "questions which piety would never have asked, and reverential wisdom never would have endeavoured to answer."[1]

Darwin had passed unscathed through the episcopal fire; but such of the essayists as were amenable to ecclesiastical discipline were made to feel the Church's displeasure. The Court of Arches condemned Williams and Wilson to suspension from office and benefice for one year—Williams for challenging the doctrine of the literal inspiration of Scripture, Wilson for expressing doubts as to the eternal punishment of the wicked; but the sentence was reversed on the appeal to the Judicial Committee of the Privy Council. The governing body of Rugby School took no action against Dr. Temple, but the displeasure of orthodox Oxford with Jowett took the form of a refusal by the authorities to increase to a reasonable figure the nominal emoluments of his Greek professorship. Baden Powell died before proceedings could be taken against him; Goodwin, as a layman, was not responsible to any authority in the matter of heresy; Mark Pattison's essay was pronounced to be purely historical, and proved no bar to his appointment in 1861 as Rector of Lincoln College.

How far the Church of England has receded from the position she maintained in 1861 in relation to modern science may be judged in the light of Dr. Temple's appointment as Bishop of Exeter in 1869, of London in 1885, and his advancement to the Archbishopric of Canterbury in 1896. Also, the academic fury against Jowett speedily evaporated, and Balliol men will be found slow to admit that their college suffered under his mastership from 1870 to 1893.

The leaven of criticism was working among the clergy in distant lands, as it must work in every religious organisation that admits the right of private judgment and is

[1] *Quarterly Review*, January 1861.

devoid of a central despotic authority. John William Colenso, the son of humble Cornish parents, having been successively sizar and fellow of St. John's College, Cambridge, and having made his name familiar to generations of schoolboys through his text-book on arithmetic, was named Bishop of Natal in 1853. He began in 1862 a *Critical Examination of the Pentateuch*, leading up to the conclusion that the books contained in it were compilations by the prophet Jeremiah.[1] For these heretical utterances he was summarily deposed and excommunicated in 1863 by Bishop Gray of Cape Town. Again the Judicial Committee was invoked, which found that, whereas the Letters Patent appointing Gray Bishop and Metropolitan had not been confirmed by Act of Parliament, as they should have been, the sentence pronounced by Bishop Gray was null and void.

Bishop Colenso's case, 1862.

We may pause here for a moment to note the attitude assumed respectively by the two leaders in the House of Commons towards the daring advance of rationalism. For once, Gladstone and Disraeli professed similar opinions, based, however, upon grounds of very diverse nature.

Disraeli, whom nobody suspected of earnest attachment to any particular creed, beyond the value he attached to religion in general as the most efficient kind of moral police, and to the Church of England in particular as one of the political bulwarks of the constitution, attempted to riddle the pretensions of modern science with balanced epigram and stinging phrase. "Is man an ape or an angel?" he asked of the Oxford Diocesan Council in 1864, Bishop Wilberforce presiding; "I, my lord, am on the side of the angels."[2] This disposed of Darwin and the

[1] The incident was embodied by a contemporary wit in the form of squib now known (for some occult reason) as a "Limerick"—

"There once was a Bishop Colenso,
Who reckoned from one up to ten so,
That he found the Levitical
Books unarithmetical,
And hastened to tell the black men so."

[2] The saying furnished a subject for one of John Tenniel's happiest cartoons in *Punch*—Disraeli "dressing for an Oxford *bal masqué*" as an angel.

evolutionists, whose views had been public property for three years. As for the essayists, they were dismissed as "nebulous professors, who, if they could persuade the public to read their writings, would go far to realise that eternal punishment which they deny." Colenso was contemptuously classed among "prelates who appear to have commenced their theological studies after they had grasped the crozier."

Free from all such cynicism was Gladstone's anxious outlook upon the situation created by the Committee's reversal of the sentence pronounced upon Dr. Williams and Mr. Wilson. No latitudinarian germ had found a nidus in that ardent intellect.

"It appears to me," he wrote to Bishop Tait of London, "that the spirit of this judgment has but to be consistently and cautiously followed up in order to establish, as far as the court can establish it, a complete indifference between the Christian faith and the denial of it. I do not believe it is in the power of human language to bind the understanding and conscience of man with any theological obligations which the mode of argument used and the principles assumed [in the judgment] would not effectually unloose."[1]

The unquestioned fervour of the Liberal leader's faith was warrant for the boundless confidence reposed in him at this time by the clergy and people of the Established Churches. No weapon forged against them could prosper while the author of *The State in its Relations with the Church* was there to hold the Radicals in leash. They were to have a rude awakening. Gladstone was drawing towards the not distant brink of one of those "great deaths or transmigrations of spirit" about which he once wrote to Bishop Wilberforce.[2]

"The time will come when you *will* hear me!" Few—very few—who in 1837 had heard this vaunt flung by the young Disraeli at a derisive House of Commons were present to witness its complete fulfilment in 1868. It is a commonplace of human experience that a man who has the gift of concentrating all his energies upon a single aim will go far and high, even if his other faculties are no

[1] Morley's *Gladstone*, ii. 164.

[2] See vol. ii. p. 325 of this work.

more than mediocre. Nay, but is not that power of concentration—of subduing every whim, passion, distraction, even friendship and natural affection, to the single aim—is not that in itself one of the rarest and most formidable of human attributes, the only one that enables a man to accomplish *his utmost?* Indeed, among the many definitions of genius which have been essayed, that which describes it as consummate power of concentration is probably nearest the mark, and this power Disraeli possessed in singular measure. Race, dress, and address—all were unfavourable to his success in that intuitively critical assembly, the House of Commons; but, by living in and for that House, conserving every particle of energy for it, having besides the gifts of imagination, patience, culture, swift and penetrating thought, he soon acquired a balanced fluency in speech, and became one of the most imposing figures of the time. The Conservatives—*malgré eux*—had been constrained to recognise him as their leader; wherefore when Lord Derby, in his seventieth year and crippled with gout, resigned the premiership,[1] the Queen most naturally offered it to the Chancellor of the Exchequer.

Fulfilment, said I? Nay, here is Disraeli in the place of highest honour, but where is the power that he has planned his life to secure? He will wait for that—patient, sagacious, vigilant; meantime he cannot lay his reckoning for a majority on any question which may unite the Opposition under a resolute commander. Such a question—such a commander—were ready at hand. Russell had resigned the Liberal leadership at Christmas, nor could Gladstone

Disraeli's first administration, Feb.–Dec. 1868.

[1] Lord Derby died on 23rd October 1869. He owed his well-known sobriquet to Disraeli, who exercised his gift of sarcasm upon him in the course of debate in 1844. "The noble lord," he said, "in this case, as in so many others, first destroys his opponent, and then destroys his own position. The noble lord is the Prince Rupert of parliamentary discussion: his charge is resistless; but when he returns from the pursuit he always finds his camp in possession of the enemy." Two years later, Sir E. B. Lytton fixed the title in his poem, "The New Timon," and, in a few vigorous decasyllables, gave a lifelike sketch of this fascinating character—

> "The brilliant chief, irregularly great,
> Frank, haughty, rash, the Rupert of debate,
> Nor gout nor toil his freshness can destroy,
> And time still leaves all Eton in the boy."

affect to deplore that as a loss. "A great reputation," he wrote to Lord Granville, "built itself up on the basis of splendid public services for thirty years; for almost twenty it has, I fear, been on the decline."

The first use Gladstone made of his leadership carried dismay among those Palmerstonian Liberals who had sadly misconstrued his principles in regard to existing institutions. The Established Churches, at least, were surely secure from menace by this devout son of Oxford, to whom undogmatic religion was as salt which had lost its savour. In 1865 he had voted against the motion that the case of the Irish Church "called for the early attention of the Government," and in writing to a clerical friend he pronounced the question to be "remote and apparently out of all bearing on the practical politics of the day." In 1866, as leader of the House of Commons, he met a similar motion with a direct negative, explaining to W. C. Fortescue, Irish Secretary, that "we may always put it on the ground of time, *as well as on its merits.*"[1] But in 1867 events took place which shrewdly accelerated Gladstone's reckoning of political time, and induced him to take a course for reasons which, when he afterwards naïvely explained them in Parliament,[2] stamped all his subsequent legislation for Ireland as base metal.

"In my opinion, and in the opinion of many with whom I communicated, the Fenian conspiracy has had an important influence with respect to Irish policy. . . . The influence of Fenianism was this—that when the Habeas Corpus Act was suspended, when all the consequent proceedings occurred, when the metropolis itself was shocked and horrified by an inhuman outrage, when a sense of insecurity went abroad far and wide . . . when the inhabitants of the different towns of the country were swearing themselves in as special constables for the maintenance of life and property—then it was when these phenomena came home to the public mind and produced that attitude of attention and preparedness on the part of the whole population of this country which qualified them to embrace, in a manner foreign to their habits at other times, the vast importance of the Irish controversy."

Such was the ornate periphrasis whereby the Head of the Executive (for Gladstone spoke these words as Prime

[1] The italics are not in the original.

[2] 31st May 1869.

Minister) conveyed notice to the people of Ireland that, although he had refused to entertain their demands when constitutionally formulated in Parliament, he recommended Parliament to grant them so soon as they had been strengthened by such "phenomena" as "inhuman outrage" and the creation of a sufficient "sense of insecurity." It was the first avowal by a responsible Minister that such acts were not evils from which the executive existed to protect the community, but guide-posts for the course of legislation.

The abjectness of this humiliating avowal was perhaps a penitential act imposed upon Gladstone by his sensitive conscience, for the Established Protestant Church of Ireland was the most vulnerable part of the Constitution; there were plenty of plausible, even valid, arguments for bringing its ascendency to a close; yet it was one which the Conservative party were bound by repeated pledges to defend. The Irish peasantry, except those of the greater part of Ulster, were Roman Catholics endowed with that fervour of devotion that is engendered of persecution.

The persecution had ceased; the disabilities had been removed, but the Protestant establishment remained a monument of conquest, an alien Church which could never be anything else. As a missionary agency it had failed miserably; it presented itself to Gladstone as the very core and pillar of disaffection, and it was very easy for him to make out a strong case for its removal. In March 1868 he brought forward three resolutions declaring that the Irish Church should cease to exist as an establishment, and in support of these resolutions the entire Opposition voted together for the first time since their election in 1865. The first resolution was carried on 30th April, against Ministers by a majority of 65. Disraeli, perceiving that the game was up in the existing Parliament, advised the Queen to dissolve it, so as to get the opinion of the new electorate which had been called into being by his own "leap in the dark," but which would not be on the registers till the autumn. At the same time, he offered to resign at once if the Queen considered that the more advisable course in the interests of the country.

Parliament was prorogued in July, and dissolved in November; the interval being spent in such canvassing and platform work as had never afflicted the country before. The result of the general election was a sweeping majority of 115 for the Liberals, seeming to justify the jeers which had greeted Disraeli's professed belief in the existence of the Conservative working man. The solid phalanx of metropolitan Liberalism had indeed been broken by the return of three Conservatives,[1] and Gladstone himself was beaten in Protestant Lancashire; but the leap in the dark had landed the Ministerialists in such a hopeless bog that their chief anticipated certain discomfiture in the new Parliament by resigning office on 1st December.

Resignation of Disraeli Government, 1st Dec. 1868.

Gladstone, having found a seat at Greenwich, set to work to obey the Queen's bidding to form a Ministry. The most notable accessions to the Cabinet were those of John Bright, leader of the Radical party, who became President of the Board of Trade, and Robert Lowe, the relentless antagonist of electoral reform, who became Chancellor of the Exchequer. In the person of Bright a pillar of importance was incorporated in the Ministry, for no man—not Gladstone himself—had such command of impressive speech; besides which, Bright's admission to the innermost council marked an epoch in parliamentary history, for it denoted the fusion, once and for all, of the Radical and Liberal parties.

Mr. Gladstone's first administration, Dec. 1868–Feb. 1874.

Satisfied with his mandate from the constituencies, Gladstone applied himself immediately to planning the campaign against the Irish Church. "Our three *corps d'armée*, I may almost say, have been Scotch Presbyterians, English and Welsh Nonconformists, and Irish Roman Catholics."[2] On 1st March 1869 he introduced the Bill for disestablishing and disendowing the Irish Church. Public attention was riveted, not only by the unprecedented nature of the

The Irish Church Bill, 1869.

[1] Lord George Hamilton for Middlesex, Mr. Bell for the city, and Mr. W. H. Smith, who ousted John Stuart Mill from Westminster. Mr. Bell died before the new Parliament met.

[2] Letter to Bishop Hinds (Morley's *Gladstone*, ii. 259).

measure, but by the magnitude of the plunder. The property it was proposed to appropriate was estimated thus:

Tithe rent-charge	£9,000,000
Lands and perpetuity rents . . .	6,250,000
Money	750,000
	£16,000,000

Of this total a sum of £8,650,000 was allocated to provide for life interests, lay compensation, commutation of the Maynooth grant and *Regium Donum*, &c., leaving a free surplus of between seven and eight millions. The debates which followed were worthy of so momentous an issue. Disraeli, indeed, was not at his best. His speech on the second reading had a perfunctory ring in it, as if he laboured under obligation to make a demonstration of defence, where defence was hopeless. But no Irish question can be discussed in Parliament without opening wells of oratory compared with which the average English and Scottish declamation is as wayside puddles fretted by the wind. Gladstone's perfervid eloquence in onslaught, his lucidity in explaining details and the classical dignity of his perorations, kept every man steady in the ranks when the assault was delivered. Nay, but there was one tried soldier who fell out rather than have any hand in the spoils of conquest. Sir Roundell Palmer,[1] who had served in successive Liberal administrations as Solicitor-General and Attorney-General, was in favour of disestablishment but could not reconcile disendowment with the recognised principles of justice. He denied that there could be any distinction drawn between private and corporate property, and he delivered a powerful speech against the bill from the bench behind Ministers. He was heard with attentive sympathy, for it was commonly known that he had declined the Woolsack—the richest prize which it was in the Prime Minister's gift to bestow—and politicians, a class not invariably above suspicion of self-seeking, know how to appreciate a sacrifice for conscience sake on the part of

[1] Afterwards Lord Chancellor, 1872–74 and 1880–85; created Baron Selborne 1872, and Earl of Selborne in 1882.

one of their number. If it be true that every man has his price, what bid must be made for one who rejects the offer of £10,000 a year, with a peerage, and a contingent pension of £5000 for life!

The bill never was in any jeopardy in the Commons. Only once in the numerous divisions in committee did the Government fail to command a majority of three figures, and this, men thought, might mitigate, if it did not avert, the dangers lying in wait for the measure in the House of Lords. The Queen was at Balmoral. Since the Prince Consort's death she had led a very secluded life, to the regret, and, it must be added, to the irritation, of a considerable section of her people. Her Majesty's avoidance of appearing in public, and her absence from the neighbourhood of Parliament in critical times during the first twenty years of her widowhood, caused considerable inconvenience and anxiety to successive Ministries. "How much more effectually," wrote Gladstone in the middle of the Irish Church crisis, "could the Queen assist in the settlement of the question were she not six hundred miles off."[1]

The Queen and the bill.

A couple of years later, popular discontent manifested itself through plain speaking in the newspapers. The nation, it was said, was willing to bear the expense of a monarchy, but the Sovereign must be something better than a royal recluse. Balmoral and Osborne were pleasure palaces, all very well for periods of relaxation, but not posts of duty when great issues were being decided. Lord Oranmore was dissuaded with difficulty from proceeding with a motion, of which he gave notice in the Lords, practically censuring the Sovereign for her prolonged absence from the metropolis,[2] and what Lord Oranmore was prepared to say in public, many wiser persons were muttering in private. Let it be recorded, once for all, as may be done with absolute truth, that Queen Victoria's prolonged seclusion was the only cause for dissatisfaction that she ever gave her subjects throughout her long reign, and it was one which she lived to dispel.

[1] Morley's *Gladstone*, ii. 268.
[2] Fitzmaurice's *Life of Lord Granville*, ii. 20.

Few persons outside the Cabinet or the Royal Household were aware that it was neither for relaxation or for pleasure that the Queen avoided London and Windsor during the busy season, but to husband her strength for unremitting attention to affairs of State and to the upbringing of a large family. Distance did not diminish her anxiety as to the course the Lords would take with the bill. Deeply as she disliked it—how deeply she had never concealed from its author—she never departed from the spirit of her reply to the resolutions of the Commons in 1868:

"I desire that my interest in the temporalities of the United Church of England and Ireland may not stand in the way of the consideration by Parliament of any measure relating thereto that may be entertained in the present session."

And now that the nation had constitutionally declared against the Irish Church, the Queen used all her influence to avert a collision between the two Houses.

"Carried as it [the bill] has been by an overwhelming and steady majority through a House of Commons chosen expressly to speak the feeling of the country on the question, there seems no reason to believe that any fresh appeal to the people would lead to a different result. The rejection of the bill, therefore, on the second reading would only serve to bring the two Houses into collision, and to prolong a dangerous agitation on the subject."

She wrote to the Archbishop of Canterbury—she wrote to Lord Derby—dwelling on the constitutional danger entailed by the rejection of the bill. Lord Derby would not be persuaded; the last speech ever delivered by the Rupert of debate was a fearless assault upon the second reading.[1] The two English archbishops abstained from voting; so did Bishops Wilberforce and Jacobson. The only prelate who voted for the bill was Bishop Thirlwall of St. David's. But what saved the measure was the action of Lord Salisbury, who led thirty-five peers into the "content" lobby, and the second reading was carried by thirty-three votes.

Now Lord Salisbury was always so fearless of unpopularity, he was then, and was to be for so many years to come, such a commanding figure in the Conservative

[1] He died on 23rd October following.

camp, that the principle upon which he acted on this occasion is worth remembering. He had clearly enunciated it in the preceding Parliament, when he voted with the majority of the Lords in throwing out the Suspensory Bill which Gladstone had passed through the Commons for the purpose of suspending the creation of fresh vested interests in the Irish Church. Nowhere can one find a clearer definition of the constitutional functions of the modern House of Lords than in Lord Salisbury's speech on that occasion.

Lord Salisbury on the Constitutional Question.

"I am not blind," he said, "to the peculiar obligations which lie on the members of this House in consequence of the fixed and unalterable constitution of this House. I quite admit—every one must admit—that when the opinion of your countrymen has declared itself, and you see that their convictions—their firm, deliberate, sustained convictions—are in favour of any course, I do not for a moment deny that it is your duty to yield. It may not be a pleasant process; it may even make some of you wish that some other arrangement were possible; but it is quite clear that, whereas a Minister or a Government, when asked to do that which is contrary to their conviction, may resign, and a member of the Commons, when asked to support any measure contrary to his convictions, may abandon his seat, no such course is open to your lordships; and therefore, on those rare and great occasions on which the national will has fully declared itself, I do not doubt that your lordships would yield to the opinion of the country; otherwise the machinery of government could not be carried on."

There were moments in the later stages of the bill when it seemed on the point of death; the Lords insisting on amendments which the Commons were inflexible in rejecting. On 22nd July Gladstone instructed Lord Granville to withdraw the bill.[1] "If you give it up," replied Granville, "you must find another man to lead in the Lords." Lord Cairns, who had opposed the second reading, now stepped in as peace-maker, and, Gladstone being laid up, arranged with Granville and Archbishop Tait a compromise, securing somewhat better terms for the Irish clergy. "No archbishop," wrote Lord Granville, "is ever very handy in political communications; but it is very lucky that the Church had at this moment one as

[1] Morley's *Gladstone*, ii. 275.

sensible and as little prejudiced as Dr. Tait. With either Sumner or Longley—for different reasons—we should have been shipwrecked, for, without the consent of the English prelates, the Lords would not have given way."[1] On 26th July the bill was ready for the royal assent; for good or for ill, the upas tree of Protestant ascendency had been laid low.[2]

To the representative body appointed under the Act to administer the compensation for vested interests, the following payments were made:—

Commutation of benefices, salaries, &c. .	£9,000,000
In lieu of private endowments . . .	500,000
To lay patrons	778,888
Compensation for *Regium donum* and other payments to Nonconformists . .	769,599
Commutation of Maynooth grant . .	372,331
	£11,420,818

The residue has been since applied to the following objects:—

Intermediate Education in Ireland . .	£1,000,000
Pension fund for National teachers . .	1,300,000
Distress works	1,271,000
Under Arrears of Rent Act, 1882 . .	950,000
Sea Fisheries	250,000
	£4,771,000

Those were doomed to speedy disappointment who honestly expected that the abandonment of Protestant ascendency, the spoliation of the Irish Church, the release of a batch of Fenian convicts, and the restoration of Habeas Corpus in Ireland would salve the sores of that distracted island. The first use the liberated prisoners made of their freedom was to stir the Fenian conspiracy to fresh activity; crime, chiefly agrarian, broke out with dire frequency in the autumn; the anti-British press became more virulent than before, and more troops had to be hurried across the Channel to

Renewed disorder in Ireland, 1869–70.

[1] Fitzmaurice's *Lord Granville*, ii. 14.

[2] Addressing the electors of south-west Lancashire (who were about to reject him as their member), Gladstone had compared Protestant ascendency in Ireland to that "tall tree of noxious growth."

protect life and property. Gladstone had pledged himself at the election to Irish land reform; and just as, by his own admission, crime and a sense of insecurity had been convincing arguments against the Church, so now he yielded to the same stimulants, applying himself during the autumn to the study of a subject whereon he had hitherto been no better informed than most other Englishmen. While he was still in the thick of the fight over the Irish Church, Bright urged upon him a scheme for buying out the Irish landowners, claiming to have studied the question "from a point of view almost inaccessible to the rest of your colleagues, and from which even you have not had the opportunities of regarding it." Gladstone replied, not without a tinge of sarcasm: "I have this advantage for learning the Irish land question, that I do not set out with the belief that I know it already."[1] No public man has ever had a fairer, an abler, or a more sympathetic biographer than Mr. Gladstone; but had Lord Morley been dealing with the actions of one with whom he had been less closely associated, he might have commented upon the rashness of an experienced statesman who commits himself to the destruction of a long-established system before acquainting himself with its nature and defects. Howbeit, when Gladstone applied himself, as he did with devouring industry, to acquire understanding of the land problem in Ireland, he found a far ranker crop of ills than had grown up under Church establishment.

The Irish Land Question, 1845–70.

Land tenure in Ireland, theoretically identical in general principles with that which had brought prosperity to British agriculture, had come to be worked on wholly different lines. In England and Scotland the tendency had been to throw small holdings into such substantial farms as energetic men of means might cultivate with profit, paying such rents as justified landlords in liberally investing capital for the provision of suitable buildings and fences, and in sharing the cost of improvements.

In Ireland the tendency had been all the other way. There were in that country neither mines nor, except in

[1] Morley's *Gladstone*, ii. 283.

Ulster, manufactures to attract the surplus rural population; agriculture was the sole outlet for industry, wherefore tenants were allowed to subdivide their holdings indefinitely, putting it beyond the power of any landlord to defray the cost of equipping them out of his rents. The Duke of Newcastle exactly expressed the state of the case when he said: "In England and Scotland landlords let farms; in Ireland they let land." Except, therefore, in Ulster and the fine pasture-lands of Meath, buildings, reclamation and improvements of every sort were executed by the tenants, who could not in every season wring the rent out of the soil. Huge arrears accumulated, often ending in eviction, which meant to the tenant total loss of such improvements as he might have effected. Small wonder, then, that such a decrepit agrarian system had borne a rank crop of bitterness and sedition.

In short, far the greater part of the land of Ireland was owned by men who acknowledged none of the obligations recognised in Great Britain as normally inseparable from landed estate, and cultivated—if cultivation it could be called—by peasants just managing to subsist on the produce of plots which it would be an abuse of terms to call farms, liable to have their rents raised upon such improvements as they could effect, or to forfeit such improvements altogether under eviction. The Devon Commission had reported upon these evils in 1845; but the Encumbered Estates Act of 1849, which relieved insolvent landlords by assisting them to sell their estates, merely aggravated the evils by encouraging speculative purchasers, whose only concern was to get the best possible return for their investments.

In Ulster, indeed, where Cromwell cleared away the Celtic population by means which it is not edifying to contemplate, and replaced it by planting out his troopers in the farms, the conditions were different. Not only was the prevailing religion Protestant, but the custom of tenant-right had become established, protecting the tenant from disturbance so long as he paid his rent, securing for him compensation for his own improvements when he quitted his farm, and investing him with a saleable interest

in the goodwill of the tenancy. The Ulster tenantry being prosperous, and enjoying such social well-being as was unknown in most parts of Ireland, Gladstone regarded this, not as the outcome of the superior industry and business capacity of the Saxon race, but as the effect of dual ownership arising from the recognition of tenant-right. Therefore, brushing aside the proposals of Bright and Mill for buying out the landlords, he resolved to extend the Ulster custom to every part of Ireland.

He encountered far more difficulty in getting his Cabinet to accept his Irish Land Bill than he did from either House of Parliament. Lowe, Cardwell, the Duke of Argyll, and Lord Clarendon stood stoutly for freedom of contract, but were eventually overcome by the complete mastery which the Prime Minister had made of an intricate subject. In the Commons, only eleven members—three English[1] and eight Irish—voted against the second reading, and Disraeli only mustered his forces to support a single amendment in committee—that which would have limited compensation to the value of actual improvements and withheld compensation for disturbance. The amendment was rejected by a majority of seventy-six, and thus the principle was established that the tenant had a beneficial right in the soil, a partner with his landlord in the ownership thereof. This was, as Mr. Lecky has observed, "the first step of a vast transfer of property,"[2] but the rank and file of the Conservative party had too hazy an understanding of the subject to risk interfering with legislation in a case which had been shown to be so clamant for redress. Some of them, longer-sighted than the rest, foresaw the goal towards which such legislation inevitably was leading, and drew what consolation might be had out of the reflection that the goal was still distant. Many minds, more conscientious than Louis XV.'s, have had to lull themselves with the opiate—*après moi le déluge.*

The Irish Land Bill, 1870.

While the Land Bill—a sacrifice on the altar of conciliation—was under consideration, the Government were compelled to pass yet another Coercion Act for

[1] Including the stalwart James Lowther, afterwards to become Irish Secretary.

[2] *Democracy and Liberty*, i. 165.

Ireland. They had restored Habeas Corpus, relying on the sedative effect of disestablishment upon Irish passions; but outrages became so frequent in certain counties that the Lord Lieutenant was empowered to use his discretion in proclaiming such districts; the police were authorised to search houses for arms; grand juries were charged with the duty of levying compensation upon a district where an agrarian murder had been committed; the venue might be changed in the trial of prisoners, and newspapers advocating intimidation might be seized.

Irish "Coercion Acts," 1801–1900.

This seems a fitting place for a few words upon what are commonly known as "Coercion Acts"—Crimes Acts, Arms Acts, Protection of Person and Property Acts, Suspension of Habeas Corpus—under whatsoever parliamentary titles they may be inscribed, they all arise from the same necessity, that of discharging the primary obligation of every civilised government, the protection of life and property, in a country where the populace are chronically at enmity with the civil power and where the national temperament has hitherto made it impossible for Protestants and Papists to live peaceably together. That acts of this nature crowd the Statute Book is owing to one of the chief defects of party government. The temptation to court the Irish vote has undermined the integrity of one Ministry after another —Conservative almost as much as Liberal—for the Irish vote is not confined to Irish constituencies; it has overflowed into England and Scotland, holding the balance in enough boroughs and counties to decide sometimes the issue of a general election. Coupled with the enormous proportionate over-representation of Ireland in Parliament, the Irish element in British constituencies gives a truly dangerous instability to the seat of empire. Not until 1887 had any Minister the courage to ask for and obtain permanent powers to be used when the ordinary law should prove unequal to emergency arising. Lord Salisbury's government passed the Crimes Act in that year, and there can be no better justification for keeping such a measure in reserve than was given by Mr. Balfour when, as Chief Secretary for Ireland, he resisted a sub-

sequent motion for its repeal. "Ireland," he said, "might be governed under the ordinary law if no political party would use crime for the purpose of advancing their views." One has only to read the utterances of the Irish Nationalist leader, Mr. John Redmond, to be brought to the melancholy conviction that such a condition of things is still remote.[1]

It has been the current belief among Liberals since 1886 that the frequency of Coercion Acts is one of the fruits of Irish discontent with the Union. Give them back their Parliament and the people would settle down as contentedly as the Scottish Highlanders. Nothing is easier than to disseminate this belief among people unlearned in the facts of Irish history. I have not been at pains to count the Coercion Acts passed respectively by the Irish Parliament before the Union and the Imperial Parliament after the Union; but assuming the accuracy of Mr. Herbert Paul's statement, that in the nineteenth century eighty-seven such acts were inscribed on the Statute Book,[2] there may be set against it Sir Robert Anderson's estimate that fifty-four such acts were passed through Grattan's Parliament during its eighteen years of existence.[3]

"It shall be lawful for any constable to take into custody *without a warrant* . . . all persons whom he shall find between sunset and the hour of eight in the morning, lying or loitering in any highway, yard or other place, and not giving a satisfactory account of themselves."

This may seem a provision of such extreme severity as to go far to justify the harsh things spoken and written daily about British rule in Ireland since the Union. How can a liberty-loving people submit to be dragooned in so tyrannical a fashion? The answer is that four millions of people in London retain their self-respect and liberty under this very provision, which is not quoted from any Irish Coercion Act, but from the English Metropolitan Police Act!

[1] A single extract from the dreary iteration will suffice, spoken the year before Lord Salisbury passed the permanent Crimes Act. "We have been able to force the Government to give up the ordinary law and fall back once more upon coercion." (Mr. Redmond at Glenbrien, county Wexford, 11th December 1886.)

[2] *History of Modern England*, i. 131.

[3] *Side-lights on the Home Rule Movement*, p. 42.

CHAPTER II

National Education—Scottish Education Act—The Vacant Throne of Spain—France declares War against Prussia—The Russian Note—Odo Russell's Mission to Bismarck—The London Conference—Edward Cardwell—Abolition of Army Purchase—Gladstone's *coup d'état*—Irish University Bill—Resignation of the Ministry—Gladstone resumes Office—Disraeli's second Administration—Expedition to Ashanti.

THE year 1870—the year which witnessed the downfall of the French Empire—was a busy one in the British Parliament. While the Irish Land Bill was still in embryo, John Bright, anticipating prolonged resistance to it, warned his constituents at Birmingham not to expect any other important legislation during that session. "You cannot easily drive six omnibuses abreast through Temple Bar," said he. The Vice-President of the Committee of Council on Education was William Edward Forster, a Bradford woollen manufacturer, son of a Quaker minister, an honest, rugged, dogged Radical. When he read what Bright had said, he remarked that he intended to drive through when the other vehicles were out of the way. His own vehicle was a Bill to establish a national system of Education, a design which at once let loose the whirlwind of the sects, each of which seemed to dread as the direst calamity a risk that their children should receive, under the guise of religious teaching, any instruction not precisely in accord with its peculiar tenets.

National Education, 1839–72.

The action of the State in regard to education has been traced in outline elsewhere down to the year 1839.[1] By that time the obligation had been generally, as well as officially, recognised; and in 1843 Lord Ashley obtained unanimous assent from the House of Commons for an address to the Crown praying for "means of diffusing the benefits and blessings of a moral and religious education among the working classes." Accordingly, the Conservative

[1] Vol. ii. pp. 97–100.

Home Secretary, Sir James Graham, introduced clauses into his Factory Bill of that year, providing for the education of children in manufacturing districts. But whereas the appointment of headmasters was assigned to the bishops of the respective dioceses, Dissenters and Roman Catholics vied with each other in vehemence of opposition. Although the Government had a majority of 96 against a hostile resolution moved by Mr. Roebuck, they abandoned the Bill rather than that the country should be torn by the acrimony of rival sects.[1]

The question of education was thrust aside during the years of controversy over the corn laws and free trade, but in 1858 Lord Derby appointed a Royal Commission under the Duke of Newcastle, which, reporting in 1861, showed how far short of the needs of a rapidly increasing population was the praiseworthy voluntary provision made by the Churches and Nonconformist bodies, and how far England and Wales had fallen behind Scotland and many Continental States in the training of the young. By that time Lord Palmerston was in power, still vigorous, but verging on fourscore, and with proportionately languid inclination to face the religious difficulty. But after the enfranchisement of a large number of the working classes in 1868, most people came to Robert Lowe's opinion that it was time "to educate our masters." The knottiest point for the Cabinet to decide was—should the scheme be national, compulsory, and purely secular, as Mill, Fawcett, Dilke, and other Radical enthusiasts advocated? or should it merely supplement and subsidise the voluntary schools, leaving them under denominational management, and filling up gaps by establishing undenominational schools in badly provided districts?

The Cabinet decided on the second alternative. The

[1] Seeing that in this year of grace (*of grace*, observe!) 1910 the sects remain as far from agreement on this question as ever, Mr. Roebuck's motion may be here transcribed, as showing how little abatement of jealousy has been achieved in sixty-seven years. "That in no plan of education maintained and enforced by the State should any attempt be made to inculcate peculiar religious opinions; because, as such an attempt would be considered a plan for maintaining and strengthening an undue superiority of one sect over all others, the animosities and strife already existing among different religious denominations would thereby, unhappily, be greatly increased, and the cordial co-operation of all sects and denominations, which is absolutely necessary to ensure the success of any plea of public education, rendered impossible."

Prime Minister was strongly for religious instruction as an integral part of all education, but he recoiled from the problem how "to include religion and exclude dogma,"[1] and described undenominational instruction as a "popular imposture."[2] Being absorbed in the intricacies of his Land Bill, he allowed himself to be overruled. The problem was left to be solved by the school boards what religious instruction, if any, should be given in the new schools committed to them; they were empowered to levy rates and, if they so decided, to compel the attendance of children between prescribed ages, under penalties on the defaulting parents.

In driving his omnibus through Temple Bar, Forster met with most opposition from Liberals acting on the dictates of the Birmingham League of Dissenters. These, at first, were pacified by the acceptance of an amendment moved by Mr. Cowper Temple, providing that no catechism or formal creed should be taught in a board school, and that no denominational school should be supported from the rates. But they took great offence at the provision for increasing the Government grant to all elementary schools from one-third to one-half the total cost, because the Church of England, whose schools greatly outnumbered those of all other denominations put together, would receive the lion's share of the increase.[3] Mr. Trevelyan,[4] Civil Lord of the Admiralty, resigned rather than have any hand in giving the Establishment so much advantage over Nonconformists. John Bright, who was absent from Cabinet and Parliament throughout this session owing to ill health, did not allow his rank in the Ministry to prevent him from

[1] Morley's *Gladstone*, ii. 300. [2] Ibid., 306.

[3] The following statement shows the relative proportions of schools of the various denominations inspected in England and Wales in 1871:—

Denomination	Number of Schools Inspected	Number of Pupils present at Inspection
Church of England	6,724	1,140,118
Roman Catholic	383	102,471
British, Wesleyan, and other schools . . .	1,691	352,978

[4] Now the Right Hon. Sir George Trevelyan, Bart.

denouncing the measure retrospectively as "the worst Act passed by any Liberal Parliament since 1832"; and when Forster attempted to justify his course before a meeting of his constituents in Bradford, they carried a vote of censure upon him.

The displeasure of the Radicals was counterbalanced by the support given to the measure by the Conservatives. Only on one point did they resist strongly—the proposal that school boards should be elected by secret voting. The rejection of the ballot clauses, except as applied to London, was the only important alteration made by the Lords, and the first school board for London was elected in November.[1] The action of its members on the question of religious instruction was matter of keen speculation at the time, and has been unintentionally misrepresented since.[2] This is what really took place. On the motion of Mr. W. H. Smith, it was agreed that the Bible should be read and religious instruction given (subject to the statutory conscience clause) in the Board schools. This was seconded by a distinguished Nonconformist, Mr. Samuel Morley, and supported in a remarkable speech by an avowed agnostic, Professor Huxley, who declared that he could not conceive of education without religion—that is, without something inspiring reverence and appealing to conscience. He urged not only that the Bible should be read in the schools, but that the Board's inspectors should examine the pupils in religious knowledge.

In Scotland, as already explained,[3] elementary education was far more general than in England and Wales, owing to the Act of 1696 compelling landowners to provide and maintain a school in every parish. Rural districts, therefore, were fairly well provided for; but in the course of two centuries the population had very greatly increased,[4] and had under-

Scottish Education Act, 1872.

[1] The Bill, as originally introduced, provided that there should be twenty-three school boards for London; but Lord Sandon and Mr. W. H. Smith succeeded in persuading the Government that the only way to secure the services of competent and independent men to administer the Act in populous districts was to create a central board of sufficient dignity and importance to attract them.

[2] Paul's *History of Modern England*, iii. 223.

[3] See vol. ii. p. 97.

[4] It is believed to have amounted to about a million at the time of the Union in 1707; in 1871 it was 3,360,018.

gone redistribution through the growth of manufacturing cities and the development of mines. In populous districts, therefore, the old educational machinery was quite unequal to the needs of the people. Their case was taken up in 1872, when an Act was passed on much the same lines as the English Act, with these notable exceptions, that school boards were required to be elected in every Scottish parish and burgh to manage all rate-aided schools, and that the exercise of the compulsory powers committed to them was not, as in England, optional at their discretion. Although much dissatisfaction was expressed in public meetings throughout Scotland at the proposal to leave religious teaching to the discretion of school boards, the Bill was passed through both Houses of Parliament with very little difficulty.

While Englishmen were spending the sweet o' the year 1870 in fanning their religious antipathies to a white heat, and Ministers were trying to persuade them that it might be possible for Christians to live at peace among themselves, continental affairs were driving along a fiery course from which it seemed almost impossible that Great Britain should be steered clear. Lord Clarendon died on 27th June, and Lord Granville was transferred from the Colonial to the Foreign Office. Most pacific of politicians, he was gratified by receiving assurance from the permanent Under-Secretary of that department that in all his long experience he had "never known such a lull in foreign affairs." So said Mr. Hammond[1] on 5th July, being well qualified to appreciate release from Palmerstonian volcanics, and never suspecting that a torch was to be kindled on the morrow that would set Western Europe in a flare.

The vacant throne of Spain, 1870.

Hardly had Granville settled at his desk next day when he received the first inkling of the trouble to come. The throne of Spain having stood vacant since the deposition of Queen Isabella in 1868, it was offered to Prince Leopold of Hohenzollern-Sigmaringen, who at first prudently declined it, but changed his mind; and, having obtained the consent of the head of his family, the King of Prussia

[1] Created Lord Hammond in 1874.

accepted the invitation on 23rd June. Instant and vehement objection was lodged by the French Government; resentful as it was of Prussian aggrandisement consequent upon the war of 1866, it felt, or affected to feel, that the proposal to establish a Hohenzollern dynasty beyond the Pyrenees was intolerable. Fiery speeches were delivered on 6th July by the Duc de Gramont in the Senate and by M. Ollivier in the Corps Législatif, threatening war unless Prince Leopold's candidature were withdrawn. This was playing directly into the hands of Bismarck, who had long foreseen that war was bound to come; better soon than late, he thought, well knowing that the Prussian army was ready and the French army very much the reverse.

On 8th July Gramont wrote to invite the good offices of the British Government in persuading Prince Leopold to withdraw his candidature. Granville did all he could, which perhaps was not much; but the Prince of Hohenzollern, foreseeing grave trouble, had the good sense to forbid his son's candidature (12th July). So might the cloud have rolled away, with much growling of summer thunder, had not the rulers of France deliberately stirred the war fever among their people. *À Berlin!* was the cry. On 12th July Gramont told Lord Lyons[1] that the Government was doomed if it allowed the affair to rest there. On the 13th a demand was sent to Berlin that the King of Prussia would pledge himself never to allow the Hohenzollern candidature to be renewed. Bismarck took effective means to put such a pledge beyond his master's power. With cynical precision he has left on record how he garbled the king's telegram before sending it to the newspapers.[2] "I have indeed fallen among thorns," was Granville's pathetic expression in writing to Lord Russell. He submitted to the King of Prussia that, for the sake of peace, he might inform the French Government that he approved of Prince Leopold's withdrawal. The king, it is said, was inclined to go so far; but he was in the iron grasp of Bismarck, who was now bent on war; nor indeed would the acceptance of Granville's suggestion have diverted

[1] British Ambassador in Paris.
[2] *Bismarck: his Reflections and Reminiscences*, ii. pp. 95–101.

the French Government from what had been the Emperor's purpose all along. Granville's further proposal for mediation was brushed impatiently aside; on the very day, 15th July, that it arrived in Paris the Emperor announced to the Chambers that he was going to war. English opinion was faithfully reflected in the *Times* next day—"The greatest national crime that we have had the pain of recording since the days of the first French revolution has been consummated. War is declared—an unjust, but premeditated, war."

Declaration of War, 15th July 1870.

The events of the next few weeks—the German victories at Wissembourg (4th August), Woerth, Forbach and Saarbrück (6th), Courcelles (14th), Vionville (16th), Gravelotte and Rezonville (18th), and the capitulation of the French Emperor with MacMahon's army at Sedan (2nd Sept.), lie outside the limits of this narrative, save so far as the overthrow of the French power affected the position of Great Britain in regard to her treaties. The jeopardy of that position was emphasised by the publication in the *Times* on 25th July of a draft treaty that had been submitted by M. Benedetti[1] to Count Bismarck in 1866, providing that the King of Prussia should "grant armed aid to France" in the event of a French occupation or conquest of Belgium, and support her with all his forces, military and naval, in the face of and against every other Power which should, in this eventuality, declare war."[2] Now Great Britain was bound under the treaty of 1839 to maintain the independence and perpetual neutrality of Belgium, a kingdom which lay wedged between the combatant nations, both of which, as signatories to the same treaty, were equally bound with Great Britain to respect her territory. But would they do so? Belgium lay in the direct line of march between France and Prussia; suppose one or both should violate the Belgian frontier in order to steal a strategic advantage, would Great Britain be bound to take up arms, either single-handed or in concert with the other neutral signatories, Russia and

[1] French Ambassador at Berlin.

[2] The document was communicated to the *Times* by Bismarck himself. It is printed in the *Annual Register*, 1870, p. 204.

Austria? All doubts as to the path of duty and honour were resolved, in Gladstone's mind at least, by the publication of the draft agreement between the French and Prussian conspirators. Bright, still an invalid absent from Cabinets, became restive at the most distant prospect of hostilities or preparation for them. "That the Belgians," Gladstone wrote to him, "whether they would or not, should go plump down the maw of another country to satisfy dynastic greed, is another matter. The accomplishment of such a crime as this implies would come near to the extinction of public right in Europe, and I do not think we could look on while the sacrifice of freedom and independence was in course of consummation."[1]

The army had suffered heavy reduction since Palmerston was off the scene; but, with only seven dissentient votes from peace-at-any-price members, the House of Commons now granted two millions of money and 20,000 additional men. Happily, the immediate danger was warded off by Granville's success in obtaining the assent of Prussia and France to identical treaties (9th August) guaranteeing afresh the territorial integrity of Belgium.[2]

England's strict neutrality gave equal offence to the French and Prussian governments, each accusing her of malice in not preventing the war, which each alleged she might easily have done by striking in against the other!

"The English"—wrote the Crown Princess from Berlin to her mother, Queen Victoria, on 9th August—"the English are more hated at this moment than the French, and Lord Granville more than Benedetti. . . . I have fought many a battle about Lord Granville, indignant at hearing my old friend so attacked; but all parties agree in making him out *French*. . . . I sent for Bismarck up into my room on purpose to say my say about Lord Granville; but he would not believe me, and said with a smile—'*But his acts prove it.*'"

So hard is it to keep out of the smoke when one's neighbour's house is blazing. The fact is that, at the outbreak of the war, popular opinion in Britain was keenly in favour of the Prussians, upon whom it was believed an unjust quarrel had been forced; and so it remained until

[1] Morley's *Gladstone*, ii. 342.
[2] Fitzmaurice's *Lord Granville*, ii. 41.

the biter had got so badly bitten that the misfortunes of France brought about a reaction in her favour.

The French Government, on the other hand, complained of the coldness of England, accusing Granville of having admitted the justice of their cause by suggesting to the King of Prussia that he might with honour have made the pledge required of him about the Hohenzollern candidature.

Despite this cross-fire, the British Government maintained steadfast neutrality, affording free asylum to the Empress of the French and the Prince Imperial, but exerting itself only to keep other Powers out of the vortex. Granville succeeded in obtaining a pledge of neutrality from Austria (still clotted with the blood of Sadowa), Russia, and Italy, with ultimate possibility of joint mediation.[1] Later, Mr. Gladstone would have made use of this agreement in protest against "the throttling" of Alsace and Lorraine, which he declared would be "a standing reproach to England";[2] but he had Granville and the Cabinet against him,[3] and it soon became evident how little reliance could be placed on Russian altruism.

By the Treaty of Paris, 30th March 1856, Russia and Turkey were debarred from creating or maintaining marine armament in the Black Sea, beyond a limited and equal number of small war vessels for each Power. The signatories to that treaty had been pretty well agreed that such neutralisation of the Euxine could only be temporary; indeed, it was merely provided to give breathing time to Turkey for internal reforms, which, be it said, the Porte never undertook—never seriously contemplated at that time, nor for fifty years to come.

In addition to the main treaty, there was the tripartite treaty of 15th April 1856, whereby England, France, and Austria bound themselves to regard any breach of the articles of the other treaty as a cause of war. The British public,

[1] "The great complaint of the French is that we circumscribed the war. This was no injury to France, for if Austria had joined her, Russia would have joined Germany, and the conflagration would have been general." (Lord Granville to Lord Hartington, 28th March 1880.)

[2] Morley's *Gladstone*, ii. 348.

[3] Fitzmaurice's *Lord Granville*, ii. 62.

caring nothing for diplomatic niceties, assumed that these treaties, like all others, were perpetual and inviolable—paid for by the lives of British soldiers and the money of British citizens. Consequently, there was feverish excitement in London and throughout the country when it became known that, on 31st October, Prince Gortschakoff had addressed a circular note to the Powers, informing them that his Imperial Master intended no longer to observe the treaty articles limiting his sovereignty in the Black Sea. Apart altogether from the question whether the time had not arrived when the restrictions complained of might be dispensed with, it was unthinkable that the British Government could tamely allow the treaty to be torn up and flung in its face. Granville wrote a dignified remonstrance against the doctrine that any one signatory to a treaty could release himself from its obligations without consent of the other signatories, and declared that it was "impossible for her Majesty's Government to give any sanction to the course announced by Prince Gortschakoff." There was no more practised adept at a smooth answer than "Pussy" Granville, but what likelihood was there that this one would turn away wrath? France was prostrate: Austria unready, as well as unwilling; Russia, therefore, had to deal with England alone—was England bound to defend the treaty single-handed? Was the tripartite guarantee only joint, or was it joint and several? Bismarck had come to amicable understanding with Russia before he went to war; and the Russian Minister at Washington significantly told Mr. Fish, the American Foreign Secretary, that now was a favourable opportunity for pressing the *Alabama* claims against the British Government—claims that had been long pending, the cause of angry heart-burning in the United States.

The Russian Note, 31st Oct. 1870.

Meanwhile, public feeling in London and the provinces was deeply stirred by the offensive tone of the Gortschakoff note. The war spirit waxed hot, and there were indignant complaints that the Cabinet was not called together. "Childers has been here," wrote Granville to Gladstone on 21st November. "He tells me that there is a perfect

howl about Ministers not meeting. He is more quiet in his talk than I hear some of our colleagues are. But he says if there is to be war, every day lost is most injurious. I have told him that it is impossible to say that we may not be driven into it by Russia, or by other foreign Powers, or by our own people; that we must take care of our dignity; but if there ever was a Cabinet which is bound not to drift into unnecessary wars, it is ours."

It was one thing to talk about "taking care of our dignity," and another thing to find the means of doing so in arms. In July, when it was a question whether England should allow Prussia to annex Alsace-Lorraine, Gladstone wrote to Cardwell: "What I should like is to study the means of sending 20,000 men to Antwerp with as much promptitude as at the *Trent* affair we sent 10,000 to Canada."[1] Not a very imposing demonstration in face of those gigantic continental armies,[2] yet it was the utmost of which the War Office was then capable at a sudden pinch.

Odo Russell's mission to Bismarck, 21st Nov. 1870.

Granville had recourse to a less heroic expedient. He sent Mr. Odo Russell[3] on a special mission to Count Bismarck at the Prussian headquarters in Versailles.

Bismarck received him on 21st November, expressed surprise and displeasure at the action of Russia, but declined to interfere—far too much on his hands at the moment—bowed him off at four o'clock. At ten o'clock Russell sought a second interview, when he told the Count plainly that "unless he could get Russia to withdraw the circular, we should be compelled, *with or without allies*, to go to war;" and so completely impressed him with his earnestness that, when they parted after midnight, it was with the understanding that the question should be referred to a conference of the Powers.

Now in all this Russell had played a bold game of bluff. He certainly was not authorised to pledge his Government to war, but he succeeded in imposing upon Bismarck, who

[1] Morley's *Gladstone*, ii. 339.

[2] In August 1870, the Germans had 1,124,000 troops under arms, whereof 640,000 were Prussian.

[3] Son of Lord George W. Russell; created Lord Ampthill in 1881.

desired nothing less than that the area of war should be extended while the Germans were still besieging Paris, and at a time when his difficult treaty with Bavaria had not been concluded.

The conference met in London on 17th December to deliberate upon what was, indeed, a foregone conclusion. It separated on 13th March 1871, having released Russia from the limitation of her maritime rights in the Black Sea, and having obtained her assent to the cardinal principle that no party to a treaty can release itself from its obligations without the consent of the other signatories.

The London Conference, Dec. 1870–March 1871.

The immediate danger was past. The credit for extricating the nation from an exceedingly critical embroglio must be shared between Granville, who got but lukewarm help from his colleagues, and Odo Russell, who by his daring secured the fruits of his chief's adroitness. So much we freely concede in retrospect over forty years, for what an Armageddon had to be faced if the war party had carried their will! But the Government received no credit at the time—much discredit, rather, for Englishmen felt keenly that Russia had wrested a substantial gain by defying the power of England. Ministers were parting rapidly with their popularity. They had been but two years in office, and they had passed three measures of extraordinary importance, dealing with Irish disestablishment, Irish land tenure, and national education, each hailed with enthusiasm by the Liberal party as a whole, but each creating malcontents in proportion to the interests disturbed. The legislation of 1871 added largely to the number of these.

It is one of the virtues, as some maintain—one of the most debilitating anomalies, as others—in British administrative practice that, except in legal appointments, professional experience is counted an objection, rather than a recommendation, in the head of a public department. Especially is this so in regard to the combative services, wherein technical knowledge might be held—is held in most foreign governments—to be of considerable advantage to a Minister undertaking to administer the national

forces; yet never but once since the year of Trafalgar[1] has an officer of high rank and distinction been appointed to preside over the British Admiralty or War Office.[2] So in 1871, it was from the hands of a barrister of the Inner Temple that the Cabinet accepted a drastic measure of army reform.

Edward Cardwell, Viscount Cardwell, 1813–85.

Edward Cardwell entered Parliament in 1842; a follower of Sir Robert Peel, he served as Secretary to the Treasury in 1845–46, and held office successively under Aberdeen, Palmerston and Russell, until he became Secretary of State for War in 1868. Already, in 1870, he had introduced short service—six years with the colours—and now he came forward with proposals to transfer the control of the auxiliary forces from the Lords-lieutenant to the Crown and to abolish the purchase system in the regular army. There were other provisions, but they were all jettisoned to lighten the passage of the bill through the shoals of committee. That part of his scheme which was most strongly opposed by professional soldiers was the abolition of army purchase. It had long been the recognised practice, except in the Artillery and Engineers, for an officer to purchase his first commission, as well as every subsequent step in regimental promotion. The price was regulated by statute, ranging from £400 for an ensigncy to £3500 for the command of a regiment; but early in the eighteenth century the custom of paying extra-regulation prices became established, and, although rendered penal by an act of 1798, had been consistently winked at ever since by the authorities. Thus an officer's commission became a valuable and saleable property, though he would forfeit it in case of death; but in other respects the system was undoubtedly objectionable, facilitating the promotion of rich men, and keeping back officers

Abolition of Army purchase, 1871.

[1] When Lord Barham (Admiral Middleton) was First Lord of the Admiralty. The Duke of Northumberland, First Lord in 1852, went on the retired list in 1815 as post captain.

[2] Sir George Murray, Wellington's Quartermaster-General in the Peninsula, was Colonial and War Secretary in 1828–30. Colonel, afterwards General, Jonathan Peel was War Secretary under Lord Derby in 1858 and 1866, but he had never been on active service, and won his renown on the turf and in the hunting field.

of modest means. Indefensible as it was in theory, military opinion, including that of the Commander-in-Chief, the Duke of Cambridge, was vehemently opposed to its abolition, seeing how closely it was associated with the glories of the Peninsular, Waterloo and Crimean campaigns. It had worked well, said experienced soldiers, and what more can be claimed for any military system? None the less, it was doomed, though the doom came from an unforeseen quarter, startling to old parliamentary hands.

The bill as it came before the Lords declared purchase to be illegal in future; but officers who had entered the army by purchase were to be indemnified, not only for the regulation prices of their commissions, but for whatever they had paid in excess of regulation—in all, about eight millions sterling. Quoth the Marquess of Salisbury—"If purchase has been described as a system of seniority tempered by selection, the proposed system is stagnation tempered by jobbery." Lord Salisbury lived to lead his peers sanely through many a perplexing pass; but here was unsound, unsafe counsel. The issue before the House was neither slight enough for summary treatment nor weighty enough to justify provoking collision. The Lords cast out the bill by 155 votes to 130. The Prime Minister then executed a small *coup d'état*. Within forty-eight hours of the division in the Lords, he informed the House of Commons that the Queen, acting on the advice of her Ministers, had abolished the purchase of commissions as from 1st November following, by royal warrant. The excitement caused by this announcement was intense. Disraeli, denouncing the use of the royal prerogative as "part of an avowed and shameful conspiracy against the undoubted privileges of the other House," was called to order by the Speaker, and withdrew the expression; but the Prime Minister's action was condemned as strongly by some of his own party as by the Conservatives. "If this act had been done by a Tory Ministry," exclaimed Mr. Fawcett, sightless but fervent, "it would have been passionately denounced by the Prime Minister amid the applause of the whole Liberal party." The law officers themselves were not

Mr. Gladstone's *coup d'état*, 18th July 1871.

agreed upon the constitutional rights involved. The Solicitor-General[1] justified what had been done as a legitimate exercise of the royal prerogative, the control of the army being vested in the Crown. Royal prerogative has nothing to do with the case, said the Attorney-General,[2] throwing over his colleague; the power of the Crown is statutory, conferred in 1809. Hearing these conflicting opinions, up jumped Mr. Vernon Harcourt, a dauntless Radical,[3] and challenged the Prime Minister to declare with which horse the Government meant to win—Attorney-General on Statute or Solicitor-General on Prerogative.

In passing a vote of censure on the Government for tampering with the constitution, the Lords received the support of Earl Russell, Lord Romilly and other Liberal peers, while many others abstained from voting; after which the bill passed through all its stages, that being necessary to secure compensation to officers. The end may be held by a later generation to have justified the means employed by Gladstone, which he defended on the ground that, the Sovereign having been empowered by the Statute of 1809 to issue a warrant regulating purchase, the warrant might be rescinded by the same authority without the consent of Parliament. A nice point, this, for constitutional experts to discuss; but the whole proceeding partook too much of the nature of stratagem. If it was right to employ the authority of the Sovereign in the matter, why not have done so before wasting the time of Parliament in discussing it, and then appealing to the Crown to override the decision of Parliament thereon. Taken on the lowest ground, it was an error in tactics, and added not a little to the growing unpopularity of the Government.

Disraeli was alert to take advantage of their waning prestige. A phrase in his speech at Manchester, on 3rd April 1872, has taken its place as *locus classicus* in the annals of the platform.

"As I sit opposite the Treasury bench, the Ministers remind me of one of those marine landscapes not very unusual on the coast of South America. You behold a range of exhausted

[1] Sir John Coleridge; created Lord Coleridge in 1874.
[2] Sir Robert Collier; created Lord Monkswell in 1885.
[3] Afterwards Sir W. V. Harcourt, Chancellor of the Exchequer, 1892–95.

volcanoes. Not a flame flickers upon a single pallid crest. But the situation is still dangerous. There are occasional earthquakes, and ever and anon the dark rumblings of the sea."

In 1873 Mr. Gladstone's first Administration entered upon its fifth year of existence. The Government had lost rather more than the average number of seats at by-elections; it had roused so much apprehension and harassed so many interests that its well-wishers sighed for a respite from seismic legislation during the rest of its natural term. As Lord Halifax wrote to the Prime Minister: "The feelings of those who suffer from the removal of abuses are always stronger than those of the general public who are benefited." But, whatever might be the case with the rest of the Cabinet, and despite Disraeli's picturesque metaphor, Gladstone retained his full store of volcanic energy, and, still full of serious purpose, shrank not from grappling with one of the hottest controversial problems of the day. It was part of his idiosyncrasy that subjects commonly presented themselves to his mind in a triple aspect. The House of Commons had become accustomed to hear him propound three alternative courses upon matters of policy; the rhythm of his eloquence seemed incomplete without threefold epithets and tripartite phrase. It was from this mould of thought that there sprang the Irish upas tree of his Lancashire election speech in 1868—a tree which he described as having three great branches: the Established Protestant Church, the system of land tenure, and University education. Two of these limbs he had lopped off, and now, to the dismay of his party, he bared his arm to deal with the third.

Trinity College, Dublin, had been open to Roman Catholic students since 1794, who were entitled to graduate there, and in 1872 Professor Fawcett had embodied in a bill the strong desire of the governing body to admit them to all fellowships and professorships, except theological chairs. But Gladstone, being unwilling to perpetuate Protestant ascendency, determined to remodel the constitution of Dublin University in such manner as he conceived might conciliate alike Roman Catholic and Protestant opinion. The University

Irish University Bill, Feb. 1873.

was to be incorporated with the Roman Catholic University and the non-sectarian Queen's Colleges founded by Peel's Government in 1845. These last had been denounced from the chair of St. Peter as godless and hurtful to the Christian faith; consequently, of 708 students in them in 1872, only 181 were Roman Catholics. Undeterred by the failure of these institutions, Gladstone now proposed to secularise Dublin University by prohibiting therein the teaching of theology, modern history and moral or mental philosophy, and by providing for the removal of any teacher who might be deemed to have given wilful offence to the religious convictions of any student.

Strange that an institution thus circumscribed and sterilised—debarred from entering upon some of the principal provinces of human thought—should have recommended itself to an intellect so far-ranging and many-sided as Gladstone's. Yet so puissant was his eloquence, so powerful the marshalling of his argument, that when he sat down at the close of a three hours' speech, it seemed as if all opposition had been quelled. The *Times* next morning pronounced benediction on the measure; nevertheless, after men had time for reflection they began to realise the hopelessness of reconciling sectarian rancour by expunging all religious teaching from the educational centre of a nation which, rightly or wrongly, imports religious conflict into every transaction of civil life. The measure commended itself neither to the Roman Catholic hierarchy, to English Nonconformists, nor, as the event proved, to the sense of Parliament. Its rejection was moved by the Radical, Henry Fawcett,[1] and carried by 287 votes to 284, forty-three Liberals being in the majority against Ministers.

In consequence of this reverse, Gladstone, with the assent of all his colleagues, tendered his resignation to the Queen, who said that she would send for Disraeli;

[1] Professor of Political Economy at Cambridge. At the age of twenty-five he became totally blind as the result of a shooting accident, nevertheless he was an efficient Postmaster-General in Gladstone's second administration, 1880–84, delighting in complicated numerical statistics which his remarkable memory enabled him to repeat to the House. He died in 1884.

but Disraeli declined to undertake the government with the existing House of Commons, having a Liberal majority of 90 against him. Gladstone told the Queen that the leader of the Opposition could not honourably decline the task, seeing that he had upset the administration. Disraeli admitted that for an Opposition "to use its strength for the express purpose of throwing out a Government which it is at the time aware that it cannot replace—having that object in view and no other—would be an act of recklessness and faction that could not be too strongly condemned"; but he pointed to the large number of Ministerialists who had assisted to throw out a bill, for which, had it been possible to dissociate it from party considerations, not one-fourth of the House would have voted. He refrained from asking for a dissolution; therefore, after a week of uncertainty, Gladstone resumed office with two years more of the Parliament to run.

Resignation of the Government, 12th March 1873.

Internal difficulties in the Cabinet multiplied; circumstances made it expedient to remove Lowe from the Chancellorship of the Exchequer, besides making other changes consequent upon grave irregularities in the Post Office and Office of Works, and on 8th January 1874, Gladstone wrote in characteristic terms to Lord Granville that in his opinion "the Government is approaching, though I will not say it has yet reached, the condition in which it will have ceased to possess that amount of power which is necessary for the dignity of the Crown and the welfare of the country."[1] In an immensely long letter he proceeded to set forth the improbability of any "recovery of vital force in our general administration of public business." In short, he recoiled from facing the House of Commons again with his discredited following. The upshot was that, in the last week of January the country was thoroughly taken by surprise by the announcement that Parliament would be dissolved on the 26th.

Gladstone resumes office, 19th March 1873.

The General Election which followed was remarkable in more ways than one. In 1871 Mr. Gladstone, who

[1] Morley's *Gladstone*, ii. 480.

had strenuously and consistently opposed successive proposals for secret voting, suddenly became an equally strenuous advocate of the ballot. The country in general remained indifferent on the question,[1] nevertheless a bill to give effect to the Premier's altered views was brought in by Mr. Forster, passed by the Commons, but was thrown out by the Lords. In the following year, 1872, the Lords allowed it to pass, and it was loudly proclaimed that at last there was an end to the undue influence of landlords over their tenants, and of employers over their workmen. It cannot be denied that the measure had been strongly resisted by the Conservative opposition in the apprehension that it would greatly diminish their chances of success in the constituencies, and that Liberals had anticipated a considerable accession of strength from the secrecy secured to the electors. Consequently the result of the first general election under the ballot was awaited with intense interest—by the Conservatives with misgiving—by the Liberals with sanguine anticipation. Territorial influence had received its death-blow; labour was at length emancipated from the tyranny of capital. In his dissolution manifesto the Prime Minister sought to clinch these advantages by undertaking to give "to the general consumer some marked relief in [the taxation of] the class of articles of general consumption." Middle-class support was to be courted also, which was done by promising the total repeal of the income tax[2] and relief to local taxation.

First general election under the ballot, Feb. 1874.

Disraeli had the courage to express disapproval of this headlong finance. "If," he said at Newport Pagnell—

> "If Mr. Gladstone asks me—'Are you prepared to repeal the income tax by means of imposing other taxes?' I am bound to say it is not a policy that I should recommend. If you have deviated from the national system of this country, and, instead of reserving the income tax merely for war, have retained it for other important purposes, the propriety of which I do not question;

[1] "It cannot be maintained that there was any pressing demand for the measure in the country, or that it was desirable for other than party purposes." (*Annual Register*, 1871, p. 85.)

[2] Mr. Lowe had reduced the income tax from 6d. in 1869 to 4d., and then to 3d., which yielded between £5,000,000 and £6,000,000.

if you have brought it into your financial system as a powerful, though temporary, means, I think you must take the consequences of that, and you must relieve yourselves from it, and get rid of the burden with discretion and with prudence. You must do it as gradually as your surplus revenue permits you to do it, with due consideration of all other claims upon that surplus."

Coming to indirect taxation he said: "If there be a surplus which permits us to reduce duties upon articles of general consumption, I am for reducing duties on those articles; but I say so with this reservation—I think it would be most unwise, after all the reduction which has been made in articles of general consumption, to extinguish any source or branch of revenue which exists. I think that policy has been carried already to too great an extent."

This bold and sane declaration met with a generous response. The first use which the electorate made of the secrecy of the ballot was to reject Gladstone's financial bid for their support and to cancel his majority of ninety, returning instead the Conservatives to the new Parliament in a clear majority of half a hundred, reckoning fifty-eight Irish Home Rule members as an integral part of the Liberal party, which time was to prove that they were far from being as yet.

Ministers having decided not to face Parliament, resigned; the Queen sent for Disraeli, who formed a compact Cabinet of twelve, the only new member being Mr. Richard Cross, who was appointed to the Home Office. Lord Salisbury and Lord Carnarvon, who had left the Derby Cabinet on the franchise question, went back to their old posts. Nobody could suspect either of these noblemen of sinking his convictions and principles for the sake of office. Lord Salisbury, especially, was devoted to scientific pursuits; that he was willing to sacrifice his leisure by resuming office was sufficient proof of his restored confidence in Disraeli's leadership.

Thus was Disraeli's triumph complete, and the Conservative party found itself in power as well as in place, for the first time since Sir Robert Peel had rent it asunder in 1846.

Disraeli's second administration, 1874–80.

While the bloodless battle of the polls was being waged in the United Kingdom, a short, but sharp, campaign was

being brought to a close on the Gold Coast, arising out of a dispute with Kofi Kalkali, King of Ashanti, who claimed tribute for the territory of Elmina which the British Government had purchased from the Dutch in 1872. Lord Kimberley having declined to acknowledge the claim, King Kofi attacked the Fantis, a tribe under British protection, and it became necessary to chastise him. The Ashantis are the most warlike and powerful of the many "nations" of Western Africa; they had already met British troops in battle on three previous occasions in the century,[1] but the chief difficulties in dealing with them lay in the deadly nature of the climate and the difficulty of transport. An expedition was despatched from England under Sir Garnet Wolseley[2] on 12th September 1873, and returned on 21st March 1874, having captured and destroyed Kumassi, the capital, brought King Kofi to terms, laid perpetual interdict on the hideous human sacrifices which were among his most cherished institutions, and exacted a war indemnity of 50,000 ounces of gold.

The Ashanti Expedition, 1873–74.

[1] In 1821, when the African Company was abolished by Parliament and its possessions were transferred to the Crown, Sir Charles M'Carthy was appointed Governor. In the following year he was killed in action with the Ashantis, and of his whole force only two officers and forty-eight men escaped alive. Peace was not concluded with the Ashantis till 1831.

[2] Created Viscount Wolseley in 1885.

CHAPTER III

Commercial prosperity—Abolition of lay patronage in Scotland—Purchase of Suez Canal Shares—The Royal Titles Act—Recrudescence of the Eastern Question—Disraeli receives a peerage—Gladstone and the Bulgarian atrocities—The Constantinople Conference—Russia declares war against Turkey—Northcote takes a vote of credit—Treaty of San Stefano—The Berlin Congress—Cyprus placed under British administration—The secession of Lords Carnarvon and Derby—Failure of the City of Glasgow Bank — Agricultural depression — First Midlothian Campaign—Dissolution, and defeat of the Ministry.

Disraeli assumed office under halcyon auspices. "The industry—the enterprise of the country," Gladstone had told the guests of the Lord Mayor in 1872,[1] "appears to have advanced within these last few months not by steps, but by strides; not by strides, but by leaps and bounds," and two years had brought no slackening of progress. British manufactures still held the field; the enormous output of gold had augmented the number and power of purchasers, and agriculture had not yet felt the first pinch of foreign competition. The Chancellor of the Exchequer, Sir Stafford Northcote, had inherited the comfortable surplus of six millions with which his predecessor had proposed to play ducks and drakes. The Opposition, already dispirited by their overthrow at the polls, received a heavy additional blow in the retirement of Gladstone from the leadership. Murmurs were heard against one who thus abandoned in its extremity the party to which he had seceded in its radiant noon, comparing him unfavourably with Disraeli, whose constant presence had cheered his followers when their fortunes seemed furthest from redemption. Gladstone had felt keenly the refractory conduct of his party in the old Parliament; if he allowed personal resentment to influence him, consideration is due to one who had served the

Commercial prosperity, 1872–76.

public strenuously for forty years, and who was now sixty-five.

"I felt myself," he wrote retrospectively in 1897, "to be in some measure out of touch with some of the tendencies of the Liberal party, especially in religious matters. . . . I deeply desired an interval between Parliament and the grave. In spite of the solicitations of my friends I persisted."[1]

Two years before, speaking at the Crystal Palace in June 1872, Disraeli had for the first time since the Peelite rupture sounded the true imperial note in politics, endeavouring to rouse his countrymen to a sense of responsibility in their inheritance overseas, to look beyond the existing era of commercial ascendency and rapidly accumulating wealth, and to realise the potentiality of an empire whereon the sun never sets. "Self-government," he said, speaking of those great colonies whereof he admitted he had once regarded it as the inevitable and not distant destiny that they should cast off allegiance to the British Crown and become independent nations—

"Self-government, when it was conceded, ought to have been conceded as part of a great policy of imperial consolidation. It ought to have been accompanied by an imperial tariff, by securities for the people of England for the enjoyment of the unappropriated lands which belonged to the Sovereign as their trustee, and by a military code which should have precisely defined the means and responsibilities by which the colonies should be defended, and by which, if necessary, this country should call for aid from the colonies themselves. It ought further to have been accompanied by the institution of some representative council in the metropolis, which would have brought the colonies into constant and continuous relations with the home Government."

He spoke to unheeding ears. The English people were basking in what Lord Morley has finely termed "the steady splendour of the economic era"—they were saying to themselves that "to-morrow shall be as to-day, and much more abundant"; and the suggestion of a *zollverein* or imperial customs union was deemed a dangerous heresy by a middle class glutted with the earlier and deceptive fruits of one-sided free trade. It required the pinch of

[1] Morley's *Gladstone*, ii. 498.

adversity, employment stinted, and profits disappearing in stress of competition with the overflowing wealth of the New World and the industrial renaissance of Germany, to make them realise that the commercial supremacy of Great Britain had been sapped—her very survival as a producing community threatened. Throughout the session of 1874 the Opposition waged an ineffective *guerrilla* under a sort of *junta;* but in the beginning of 1875 Lord Hartington, with the utmost reluctance,[1] undertook the thankless office of leading a deserted, dispirited and disunited party. His task was not rendered any easier by the sporadic raids made by Gladstone into debates which specially attracted him, such as those on the Public Worship Bill and the abolition of patronage in the Church of Scotland.

It was the last-named measure that tempted him on 6th July to make his first appearance in the new Parliament. Lay patronage had been the sole cause of the disruption of the Established Church of Scotland in 1843;[2] its abolition, and the committal of the election of ministers to the communicants in each parish, was such a thoroughly Liberal measure that the House, which had given Gladstone an enthusiastic welcome on his reappearance, was amazed when, with all his old vehemence, he declared himself opposed to the bill. This was straining the allegiance of his party beyond what it would bear. The second reading was carried by four times the normal Ministerial majority —307 to 109.

Abolition of lay patronage in the Church of Scotland, 1874.

There were still many Conservatives who, distrusting Disraeli's love of display and his conception of empire, had misgivings that he might lead the country upon some hazardous course of conquest abroad or attempt "dishing the Whigs" at home. But these tremors were soon allayed. The presence at the Foreign Office of the fifteenth Earl of Derby (a safer politician, men deemed, than his more brilliant sire) was as good a guarantee as might be had against continental complications, and the only extension of British dominion that took place during 1874

[1] Fitzmaurice's *Granville*, ii. 150.
[2] See vol. ii. p. 112 of this work.

and 1875 was the peaceful annexation of the Fiji Islands at the request of King Kakobau.[1]

But towards the end of 1875, when an occasion presented itself for action of bold and unusual character, the Prime Minister took matters out of the hands of Lord Derby altogether. The Suez Canal had been open since 1869; but Great Britain had neither voice in its management nor pecuniary interest in its revenue, although the British tonnage passing through it was greater than that of all other nations put together. Palmerston had refused to believe that the Canal could ever be made; he held that, even if the difficulties did not put it beyond the compass of modern engineering science, England, as the greatest maritime power, would suffer most by the consequent curtailment of voyages, and he declined to co-operate with France or the Egyptian Government in the enterprise. The necessary capital, therefore, had been subscribed almost entirely by the Egyptian Government and by private French speculators. Of 400,000 original shares the Khedive held 176,000; but he had brought himself and his Government to bankruptcy, and in 1875 his shares were about to be thrown on the French market. Mr. Frederick Greenwood, a well-known journalist,[2] propounded to the Prime Minister the idea that the British Government ought to acquire these shares. Disraeli, perceiving the danger of allowing control of the dominant route to India to pass wholly into the hands of the French Republic, promptly decided that the shares were to be bought. He did this, as Palmerston would have said, "off his own bat," contrary to the judgment of the cautious Derby and the ever-anxious Northcote. Four millions was the price, which might well make the Chancellor of the Exchequer wince; but it became speedily apparent that the bold step received enthusiastic approval

Purchase of the Suez Canal shares, 25th Nov. 1875.

[1] A group of volcanic islands in the South Pacific, about 1100 miles north of New Zealand, with an area of 7435 square miles, and an export trade (almost entirely with British Colonies) to the value of about £900,000.

[2] He founded in 1865 the *Pall Mall Gazette*, borrowing from Thackeray the title and project of a journal "written by gentlemen for gentlemen." When the *Pall Mall Gazette* passed into Radical hands, Greenwood kept his old staff together and started the *St. James's Gazette*, now merged in the *Evening Standard*. Greenwood died in 1909.

by the nation. It salved the soreness left by the slur on British honour in the Sleswick-Holstein affair, the affront to British pride conveyed in Russia's repudiation of the Black Sea clauses, and the penalty on British pockets under the *Alabama* award. But the Liberal leaders, for the nonce, were thoroughly out of touch with the times. When Parliament was asked to vote the price of the Canal shares, Gladstone emerged again from retirement to denounce stock-jobbing by the State as "an unprecedented thing." —"So is the Canal!" interjected Northcote gently across the table; and a succeeding generation has endorsed the sanction accorded by the House to such an exceptional vote. Giving all the credit due to Disraeli for a prudent piece of strategic policy, it would be claiming too much for his financial acumen to assert that he foresaw the value of these shares as an investment; but in that respect also the venture has proved a prodigious success. The shares, which cost £4,000,000 in 1875, are now of the estimated value of £18,000,000, yielding a net revenue in 1908–9 of £1,171,466.

The Royal Titles Act, 1876.

Less, far less, favourable was the effect upon public opinion of the paragraph in the Speech from the Throne in 1876, announcing that Parliament would be asked to sanction an addition to the Sovereign's titles. Closely questioned in the House what was to be the precise character of the change, Disraeli showed some reluctance to divulge it, but at last explained that the Queen would henceforward be known as Empress of India. He justified this by the fact that, since the Crown had taken over the Government of India from the extinct Company, she was *de facto* Empress over a number of Sovereign rulers in India, and no more fitting occasion of recognising her Majesty as Empress *de jure* could be had than the tour which the Prince of Wales was making in India. In vigorously criticising the proposal, the Opposition expressed publicly what the majority of educated persons were saying in private. VICTORIA REGINA was surely as proud a dignity as could be borne by any mortal; the term Empress had an un-English ring about it; nor was it a very auspicious title just then, if one remembered

the slender black-robed figure *en retraite* at Chislehurst. But the passage of the bill, had it ever been in jeopardy, would have been assured through the indignation created by a stupid argument put forward by a member whose great powers were manifestly on the decline. "What," asked Robert Lowe, "would become of the new title if we lost possession of India?"

The Opposition succeeded in obtaining from the Prime Minister an assurance that the new title should only apply to the Asiatic possessions of the Crown, where all men now agree that Disraeli was right in believing it would bear real significance. As Kaisir-i-Hind the Sovereign was brought into direct relation with her Hindu and Mohammedan subjects, who were far from insensible to this dignified recognition of their place in the Empire. In the rest of her dominions, British and Colonial, nobody ever thought or spoke of Victoria as anything but "the Queen," albeit the royal sign manual has ever since borne the initials "R. & I.," and from 1897 onwards the coinage has been stamped IND. IMP., following the ancient legend, *Fidei Defensor*.

Meanwhile affairs in the near East had burst out once again into volcanic activity. The perennial problem presented itself in an acute form how the Sultan's Government with its mediæval methods of rule—its alternation of utter neglect and sanguinary chastisement—could continue to administer its European provinces peopled by races so diverse in origin and speech, so antagonistic in religion and hereditary feud, as the Greeks of Thessaly and Epirus, the Roman Catholic Slav highlanders of Bosnia and the Herzegovina, and the lawless Albanians, partly Catholic, partly Mohammedan, each nation detesting all the others and panting for war, as Thucydides tells us they did many centuries before their passions had been embittered by the rivalry of creeds. The Christian people of Bosnia and the Herzegovina having been in arms against their Turkish masters since midsummer 1875, and the usual ferocious means of suppression having been applied, a joint Note, drawn up by Count Andrassy, was addressed in February 1876 by the Governments of Russia, Prussia, and Austria to those of Great

Revival of the Eastern Question, 1875–76.

Britain, France and Italy, inviting their co-operation in compelling Turkey to redress the grievances of her insurgent subjects. Lord Derby agreed on the part of the Queen's Government, "while respecting the independence of the Porte," and the Porte was ready, as usual, with facile promise of reform, but, as usual, without attempting to carry it out. Bulgaria joined the rebellion in April, and in that dominion the Turkish pashas followed the traditional course in hideous brutality of massacre, sparing neither age nor sex.

The conflict had assumed the character of Cross against Crescent, dangerous to the peace of Europe. On 5th May the French and German consuls were murdered by a mob at Salonica while protecting a Christian fugitive. Germany, Russia, and Austria, holding conference at Berlin, issued a fresh appeal to the other Powers, inviting them to join in forcing an armistice upon the Turks. France and Italy gave their adhesion; but Lord Derby declined, distrustful of what might lie behind the proposal of the three Chancellors, especially doubtful of the disinterestedness of Russia. There was reason to suspect that the insurrection was not altogether spontaneous and indigenous; at all events there ran a strong current of sympathy between the Russian Slavs and those of Bosnia. On 30th May the Sultan Abdul Aziz was deposed and murdered,[1] the conspirators replacing him with his nephew Murád, an imbecile youth.[2] Next, Prince Milan of Servia threw off his allegiance, declaring war against Turkey at the end of June, and was joined by Prince Nicholas of Montenegro, a nationality of splendid mountaineers, which, alone among the Balkan Provinces, had maintained its independence against the Turk for six hundred years, and that within a continuous land frontier.

The butchery in Bulgaria went on. It may not have been more inhuman than many previous acts of Turkish misrule—probably not more sanguinary than Ibrahim Pasha's attempt to exterminate the Greeks in 1825;[3] but its ghastly details were brought far more vividly home to Englishmen through the enterprise of modern journalism. About midsummer the *Daily News*, an Opposition print,

[1] It was officially asserted that he committed suicide.
[2] Who was deposed three months later in favour of his brother Abdul.
[3] See vol. i. p. 289.

began to publish sickening descriptions of the dire cruelty with which the insurgents and their families were being handled. These accounts profoundly stirred the feelings of Englishmen, and some indignation was expressed against the Government because Disraeli did not at once respond to the cry for intervention. Lord Derby, at the Foreign Office, had no inclination for another Navarino,[1] and a Radical deputation, headed by John Bright, waited upon him on 14th July, urging him to maintain strict neutrality. Derby had declined to join in the Berlin Memorandum; he fought shy of being drawn into the mess now simply on the faith of a newspaper correspondent; interference with principalities and powers being apt, in his opinion, to have graver results than rearranging the furniture of one's library. But he directed Mr. Walter Baring of the British Embassy in Constantinople to proceed to Bulgaria and report upon the state of affairs.

On 11th August, debate arising on a motion by Mr. Evelyn Ashley censuring the Government for their dilatory policy, Disraeli had to defend the policy of his Cabinet, without, on the one hand, showing indifference to suffering nationalities, or, on the other hand, wounding the susceptibilities of the Great Powers. British interests must rank before those of the Bulgarians. Overthrow the Ottoman Empire, and you have Russia established as a Mediterranean power on the direct highway to India; the Crimean War will have been fought in vain. These thoughts were in his mind, but they had to be judiciously veiled. "Our duty at this critical moment," he said, "is to maintain the Empire of England; nor will we ever agree to any step, though it may obtain for a moment comparative quiet and a false prosperity, that hazards the existence of that Empire."

These were the last words spoken by Disraeli in the House, where he had sat for forty years save one. Next morning, when his place on the Treasury Bench was filled by Sir Stafford Northcote, a well-kept secret was revealed. Disraeli had been summoned to the Upper House as Earl of Beaconsfield, the title which Edmund Burke would have taken had

Disraeli receives a peerage, 12th Aug. 1876.

[1] See vol. i. p. 292.

Benjamin Disraeli,
Earl of Beaconsfield, K.G.

LONDON: EDWARD ARNOLD

his son lived. Three days later it was announced in the Queen's Speech proroguing Parliament that her Ministers would co-operate with those of other Powers in mediation between the combatants.

This cool and temporising policy was wholly alien to Gladstone's nature. Throwing Homeric and theological exercises to the winds, he dashed into the strife with no simulated passion. His feelings were thoroughly genuine in this matter, and he gave them rein. Nevertheless, when probing the secret springs of conduct in a dominant personality, one must take into account all manifestations of motive. The crusade into which he plunged happened to coincide with the readiest means of damaging the Government, and one cannot now forget that this is the same Gladstone who a few years later when in office himself proved callous to Gordon's cry for relief at Khartum, and sanctioned the Kilmainham treaty with men who had set up a reign of terror in Ireland.

Gladstone started the campaign by issuing a pamphlet in September, entitled *Bulgarian Horrors and the Question of the East.* Basing on the papers in the *Daily News*, he denounced the Turkish nation as "the one great anti-human specimen of humanity." "Let the Turks now carry away their abuses in the only possible manner, namely, by carrying off themselves. Their Zaptiehs and their Mudirs, their Bimbashis and their Yuzbashis, their Kaimakims and their Pashas, one and all, bag and baggage, shall, I hope, clear out from the province they have desolated and profaned." He followed up the pamphlet with a speech to an enormous gathering at Blackheath, and a few days later Mr. Baring's report came to hand confirming most of the statements in the *Daily News.* He estimated that about 12,000 Bulgarians had been done to death. Ample food herein for "the silly season"; for every thousand readers who shuddered at the horrors described in the report, there was not one who paused to consider what was meant by Baring's censure on those "who, to serve the selfish ends of States whose only object is territorial aggrandisement, have not shrunk from exciting poor ignorant peasants to revolt."

Gladstone and the Bulgarian atrocities, 1876.

Gladstone's old colleagues were startled into disapproval of his reckless vehemence. Only the Duke of Argyll applauded. "I do not recollect," wrote Gladstone in his notes on this period, "to have received much assistance from the front bench. Even Granville had been a little startled at my proceedings, and wished me to leave out the 'bag and baggage' from my pamphlet."[1] The storm hurtled round the Ministry throughout the autumn holidays, but the Cabinet never flinched from the line of policy they had marked out, and public opinion began to rally to them. "I feel certain," wrote Hartington to Granville, after Gladstone had made another speech in St. James's Hall on 8th December, "that the Whigs and moderate Liberals in the House are a good deal disgusted, and I am much afraid that, if he goes on much further, *nothing can prevent a break-up of the party.*"[2] Russia had shown her hand too unguardedly when, in October, Lord Derby having proposed an armistice, and the Porte having agreed to one for six months, Russia disagreed because it would press unduly upon Servia. A proposal by Lord Derby for a Conference at Constantinople having been accepted by the five great continental Powers, Lord Salisbury went thither as British plenipotentiary. He was instructed to press, *inter alia,* for the independence and integrity of the Ottoman Empire, and for adequate security for immediate reform in the administration of the Balkan Provinces.

The Constantinople Conference, Dec. 1876–Jan. 1877.

The omens were all unfavourable. Lord Beaconsfield had made an imprudently defiant speech at the Guildhall on 9th November. "In a righteous cause," said he, "England will commence a fight that will not end until right is done." The Emperor of Russia had responded by mobilising a large force, issuing a loan of 100 million roubles, and declaring that "he was firmly determined to act independently." The overture to the concert of Europe seemed hopelessly out of tune; nevertheless the plenipotentiaries were absolutely unanimous in their demands. Unhappily, the Turkish Council was elated by a series of

[1] Morley's *Gladstone*, ii. 550.
[2] Fitzmaurice's *Granville*, ii. 167.

successes against the Servians; although the plenipotentiaries, including the Russian General Ignatieff, agreed to withdraw seven points out of nine in their demand, Midhat Pasha, the new Grand Vizier, flatly refused on 20th January 1877 to accept the remaining two conditions, which provided for the appointment of an international Commission to enforce the guarantees for reforms promised by the Porte in March 1876, and for the appointment of governors by the Sultan to be subject to approval by the Great Powers.

The Conference was dissolved. "The proposals," ran the Queen's Speech to Parliament on 8th February, "recommended by myself and my allies, have not, I regret to say, been accepted by the Porte; but the result of the Conference has been to show the existence of a general agreement among the European Powers, which cannot fail to have a material effect upon the condition and government of Turkey." In other words, the Ottoman Government in its evil courses had shown itself once more stronger than the Six Powers!

All through the winter the agitation had been raging in England, but towards spring, as there were signs that it had spent its force, Gladstone applied the blow-pipe of a second pamphlet, *Lessons in Massacre;* but whereas the first pamphlet had sold at the rate of forty thousand copies in the first three or four days, the total sales of the second did not exceed seven thousand. The Liberal party were more deeply divided than ever; the Radicals and the Duke of Argyll encouraging Gladstone to pursue his course—all the other front bench Liberals earnestly dissuading him from playing into the hands of Russia. It was with the utmost difficulty that, at the last moment, he was dissuaded from proceeding with five resolutions which he had put on the notice paper for 7th May—resolutions of which the majority of his own party strongly disapproved, because, if carried, they would have committed England to join with Russia in an armed invasion of Turkey. Notice of a hostile amendment by Sir John Lubbock,[1] a Liberal, induced him to submit a greatly modified version of the

[1] Created Lord Avebury in 1900.

first two resolutions, dropping the other three; but, so far had he lost the confidence of his own people at this time, that after five nights' debate, the Government carried the previous question by a majority of 130, their normal majority being about 50. Three weeks before this momentous division, the Tzar had declared war upon the Sultan; Bulgarian atrocities receded into the background, and British sympathy veered to the weaker combatant. The gallantry of Osman Pasha's troops, his double victory over the Russians at Plevna in July, and the heroic defence of the Shipka Pass, made people forget the broken pledges, the procrastination, the tyranny of the Ottoman Government; they remembered only that it was our old Crimean allies who were defending their country against immense odds. It was after that defence had been borne down by the resistless weight of the Russian columns, when the Sultan, being forced to accept an armistice, appealed to the Great Powers, especially to England, for help in his extremity, that Beaconsfield's policy was put to the test.

Russia declares war against Turkey, 24th April 1877.

Parliament having been hastily summoned on 17th January 1878, Northcote gave notice that he would move immediately for a vote of credit for six millions, for the Cabinet had decided to defend Constantinople against the great Northern Power. Beaconsfield was about to prove that his speech at the Guildhall was no mere boastful rhetoric. To some of his colleagues who winced at the prospect, he humorously declared that there were six parties in his compact Cabinet of twelve, one group consisting of himself and Northcote, "who desire to see something done, but don't exactly know what."[1]

Northcote takes a vote of credit, Jan. 1878.

On 23rd January Admiral Hornby's fleet was ordered up from Besika Bay to hold the Dardanelles, ostensibly to protect British lives and property in Constantinople. The Cabinet had come to this decision on the 12th, but it was rescinded in order to avert the resignation of my Lords Derby and Carnarvon. When the order actually went out

[1] Lang's *Life of Sir S. Northcote*, p. 288.

Carnarvon resigned at once.[1] However, when it became known that the terms of peace offered by Russia weer comparatively moderate, the fleet was recalled by telegram to Besika Bay.[2] The sky seemed to be clearing; but the Government persevered with the vote of credit, for, the armistice notwithstanding, the Russians had resumed the advance on Constantinople. On 7th February came a telegram from Mr. Layard, British Ambassador at the Ottoman Court, announcing the near approach of the Russian advanced guard. When Northcote read out this to an excited House, Forster at once withdrew his hostile amendment, and although Gladstone led the Radicals into the division lobby, Hartington and the other front bench Liberals walked out; twenty or thirty Liberals supported Ministers, and the vote was carried by a majority of 199.

The figures—295 to 96—accurately reflected the feeling in London and the country at the time. The crimes of Turkey were forgotten or condoned in the resolve to withstand Russian aggression, and the English language was permanently enriched by the terms "Jingo" and "Jingoism," equivalent to one of similar origin and meaning in French speech,[3] through Sir Wilfrid Lawson, a Radical, derisively quoting in the House a music-hall ditty very popular at the time—

> "We don't want to fight, but, by jingo! if we do,
> We've got the ships, we've got the men, we've got the money too."

On 8th February six British ironclads were moved up again to Constantinople, whereupon Prince Gortschakoff announced that the city would be immediately occupied by Russian troops. To send warships into the Dardanelles without the Sultan's firman was a violation of the Treaty of London; to have done so without corresponding pre-

[1] He was succeeded at the Colonial Office by Sir M. H. Beach (created Viscount St. Aldwyn in 1906).

[2] Transactions such as this—rapid and momentary oscillations between peace and war—cause one to realise the effect of rapid communication in controlling the action of armies and navies at great distances, as compared with the conditions in the first half of the century, when despatches were carried in sailing frigates.

[3] *Chauvin* or *chauviniste*, a boastful and aggressive patriot; from Chauvin, a character in Scribe's *Soldat Laboureur*.

paration at home would have been but a feeble menace. The arsenals and dockyards were already working at high pressure, the Admiralty having issued orders to fit out every available ship.

A message from the Queen, announcing that a portion of the Reserves would be called out, was met by the Radicals with a motion of no confidence in the Government, to which Gladstone gave his utmost support. But at this time Gladstone had lost all hold over his party; all of whom, except the Radical tail, adhered firmly to honourable Whig tradition that in foreign affairs there must be one England—not two Englands. The address was agreed to by 310 to 64; and a Jingo mob broke Gladstone's windows in Harley Street on 24th February. Throughout that month the tension continued feverish. On the 15th, Mr. W. H. Smith, who had been appointed First Lord of the Admiralty in August 1877, on Ward Hunt's death, telegraphed to Admiral Hornby in terms which left small prospect of peace being preserved:

"All ships but one are to go from Besika Bay to Gulf of Xeros, with orders to watch Russian troops, and if they observe preparations for embarkation with a view to landing on the peninsula of Gallipoli, they are to warn Russian commander they have orders to prevent such landing, and they are to oppose it by force if persevered in. W. H. S."

Treaty of San Stefano, 3rd March 1878.

On 3rd March a treaty of peace between Russia and Turkey was signed at San Stefano; but this did not much relieve the situation, for although the terms as a whole were more moderate than had been expected, some of them were inconsistent with the integrity of the Turkish Empire, which was guaranteed by Great Britain, France and Austria under the tripartite treaty of 1856. Lord Derby at once informed Prince Gortschakoff that no such treaty would be recognised without the consent of the guaranteeing Powers. Gortschakoff declined on 16th March to submit for approval any part of the treaty except what affected European territory. The whole, replied Derby, or none; and again the prospect was overcast. The British Reserves were called out, and 7000 Indian troops were ordered to

Malta. This was too much for Lord Derby's nerves; he resigned, and the seals of the Foreign Office passed into the firmer hands of Lord Salisbury.

Notwithstanding this defection, the Russian Government had fully realised by this time that the Beaconsfield Cabinet meant business; the immense majorities by which successive votes of censure had been rejected by the House of Commons, coupled with the warlike tone of the press and the demeanour of the people, showed that Ministers had the nation at their back. The Tzar, it was known, passionately longed for peace; the campaign of 1877 had been a costly one in lives and money.[1] The orders to seize Gallipoli were countermanded on condition that the British fleet was withdrawn from Constantinople.

Meanwhile, on 1st April, Lord Salisbury had communicated with the Great Powers, inviting them to a Congress upon the treaty of San Stefano. "Every material stipulation it contained," he said, "is a departure from the treaty of 1856." Next month Count Schouvaloff returned to London, and after he had conferred with Lord Salisbury, it was announced on 3rd June that a Congress was about to be held in Berlin, whereat Beaconsfield and Salisbury would represent the Queen's Government.

A dramatic surprise had been prepared for the European public, but it was marred by the malfeasance of a Foreign Office hireling,[2] who communicated to the *Globe* newspaper the text of a secret agreement between Salisbury and Schouvaloff, settling beforehand the points in dispute between their respective Governments. The work of the Congress, therefore, resolved itself into little more than a ratification of this compact and of another secret convention which Salisbury had concluded with the Ottoman Government. Russia was allowed to keep what she had conquered in Armenia, except Erzeroum; she also retained Bessarabia (which she had lost in 1856), Roumania receiving in compensation the Dobrutscha and the Turkish islands

The Berlin Congress, 13th June 1878.

[1] The Russians lost about 16,000 men at Plevna.

[2] Not a regular member of the establishment. Charles Marvin was temporarily employed as a copyist. He wrote several books on Russia, and died in 1890.

at the mouth of the Danube. Bulgaria, north of the Balkans, received autonomy under nominal suzerainty of the Sultan; southern Bulgaria, under the name of Eastern Roumelia, remained a Turkish province, but under a Christian governor.[1] Bosnia and the Herzegovina were handed over to Austria; the independence of Servia, Roumania and Montenegro was recognised, the last-named principality receiving what its people had coveted for centuries, access to the sea by the cession of Antivari.

By a separate and secret treaty between Great Britain and the Porte, dated 4th June, the island of Cyprus, though remaining part of the Sultan's dominions, was placed under British administration for so long as Batoum and Kars should continue in the possession of Russia.[2] By the same treaty Great Britain was bound to maintain the integrity of the Turkish dominions in Asia, exacting guarantees for the better government of the Armenian Christians.

Cyprus placed under British administration, 4th June 1878.

The return of the British plenipotentiaries on 16th July was fixed in public memory by their triumphal progress through London amid the spontaneous acclamation of the citizens, and by a speech made by the Prime Minister to the crowd in Downing Street, in which he claimed that he and his colleague had brought back "Peace with Honour."

The phrase embodies the most precious boon that can be secured to a nation; nor could the detractors of the Government either deny that peace had been established or lay finger upon any slur of honour. Yet had Gladstone no word of approval for either the means or the result; on the

[1] By the revolution of 1885, Eastern Roumelia was incorporated with Bulgaria.

[2] In the following autumn Mr. Stanley (afterwards sixteenth Earl of Derby), as Secretary for War, and Mr. W. H. Smith, as First Lord of the Admiralty visited Cyprus in order to form an estimate of how far it might fulfil Beaconsfield's claim for it as "a place of arms." At that time, Mr. Bromley Davenport and Sir Wilfrid Lawson being the recognised sonneteers respectively of Government and Opposition, the former celebrated the occasion in the following lines:—

> "The Chief of the Army and Lord of the Fleet,
> Proceeded to visit both Cyprus and Crete;
> The natives, delighted to see such fine stars,
> Christened one of them Neptune, the other one Mars.
> They erected an altar to Stanley forthwith,
> And put up a *bookstall* to W. H. Smith."

contrary, many words of measureless reprobation. The public—the countries of Europe, if they cared to listen—drew what edification might be had from the two leading Englishmen elaborating vituperation. Gladstone having denounced the convention with Turkey as "insane,"—"I would put this issue," retorted Beaconsfield, guest at a great banquet in the Knightsbridge riding school, "to an intelligent English jury: Which do you believe most likely to enter into an insane convention—a body of English gentlemen, honoured by the favour of their Sovereign and the confidence of their fellow-subjects, managing your affairs for five years, I hope with prudence and not altogether without success, or a sophistical rhetorician, intoxicated with the exuberance of his own verbosity?"

Gladstone flung back the taunt in print, for the House was up, complained of "the manner in which for some time past pure rhodomontade has not only done the work of reasoning, but has been accepted as a cover for constant miscarriage and defeat."

Bloodless passages of sound and fury such as these are not worth exhuming, save as illustrating the more grotesque phenomena of government by party. They served to excite and amuse the public in those days; a new generation has arisen since then, but it is difficult to detect that any advance has been achieved towards an ideal condition, when foremost men, instead of publicly reviling each other's actions in the presence of stupendous problems involving the fate of millions, shall combine their talents and zeal in efforts for their country's weal. Neither in Parliament nor in the country did Gladstone find any considerable sympathy when he repined for the years (of his own administration) when "British interests were not set up as the first and great commandment," than which most Englishmen could think of no principle more proper for the guidance of British statesmen. This also was the opinion expressed by the House of Commons on 2nd August, when, by a majority of 143, it rejected Lord Hartington's motion of censure on Ministers.

Of the six millions voted for precautionary measures, less than half was actually spent. How much may be

reckoned as value received? Opposition speakers and prints at the time, Liberal historians subsequently, derided these precautions as needless and ineffective. They pointed to the liberation of Bulgaria as the fulfilment of Gladstone's bag-and-baggage policy, and to the cession of territory by the Sultan as proof of failure in Beaconsfield's undertaking to maintain the Turkish Empire in its integrity. It is true that the Berlin Congress did little more than sanction the provisions of the San Stefano treaty; but that sanction was delivered by concert of the Powers, not at the dictation of a single aggressive autocrat. It required that sanction to relieve England from her obligations under the tripartite treaty of 1856, from which she could not otherwise have departed without loss of honour, and which she could not have discharged without the expenditure of many times two millions and a half. Beaconsfield's policy effected that which Gladstone's would have been powerless to do, namely, to keep Constantinople, the key of the East, in the only hands incapable of using it to the detriment of England.

The position of the seceding Ministers.

The action of the seceding lords demands consideration before passing from this phase of European politics. To weigh the merits of such a nice question justly one should analyse it *in vacuo*, or at least in an atmosphere sterilised of partisan germs. It is for the reader to decide whether he can accept the judgment of one who has spent the best years of his life in the operative ranks of a political party, and who must start with the postulate disallowed by Mr. Gladstone—that, for British statesmen, British interests must be the first and great commandment. Accept that, and the difference becomes clear between resignation at the height of a foreign crisis and resignation on a mere question of domestic policy. Pitt resigned in 1801 on a purely domestic question;[1] so did Lord Carnarvon and Lord Salisbury in 1867;[2] nothing was involved in either case but the stability of the administration. But when Carnarvon resigned in January 1878, he chose a moment when it was imperative that the Government should present a united front in the face of a European crisis. For more than a year he had been an

[1] See vol. i. p. 13.

[2] See vol. ii. p. 335.

assenting party to the policy of keeping Constantinople inviolate; he had made no overt sign of dissent when his chief declared at the Guildhall in November 1876, that "England will commence a fight that will not end until right is done." If Carnarvon's judgment warned him against the expediency of defending Constantinople by force of arms, why did he not retire from the Government then? Why did he continue to support Beaconsfield's policy during eighteen months, till the moment came for putting it into effect?—the very moment when his resignation must take most damaging effect on the Cabinet, and, through the Cabinet, jeopardise the position and prospects of the country. The line of action which he considered right throughout 1876 and 1877 cannot suddenly have become wrong in the early days of 1878. His resignation, therefore, can only be attributed to one of two agencies—failure of nerve in a crisis calling for supreme resolution, or undue solicitude for his own reputation as it might be affected by events taking a disastrous course. It is not of such metal that great rulers are wrought. Lord Derby's case was somewhat different. He, too, had incurred responsibility as a party to the declared policy of the Cabinet, only flinching when it came to be put in force; but his sympathy had long been gravitating towards the Liberal party, which he definitely joined in 1880. It had been far better for his reputation had he done so ten years sooner.

Beaconsfield's speech to the crowd in Downing Street marked the zenith of his own course and the turning-point in the prosperity of his administration. Party tacticians afterwards declared that, in not recommending the Queen to dissolve Parliament he forfeited the advantage of the flood-tide of popularity. But what excuse could be framed for a Minister who should launch the country into the turmoil and cost of a general election merely to ensure another lease of power for his party? The House of Commons had given approval to every step in the Government policy by treble and quadruple the mere party majority; the constituencies showed no signs of disaffection; if the Prime Minister ever contemplated dissolution, he did well not to set such a mischievous precedent.

Nevertheless, from that moment all things went ill with the Government. No sooner was anxiety at rest about the Balkan imbroglio than there came news of disaster from the further East, Sir Louis Cavagnari, British envoy to Cabul, having been massacred with his whole escort and suite. Also there was storm brewing in South Africa, where the High Commissioner was at issue with the powerful Zulu nation. Nearer home, nay, in our very midst, the City of Glasgow Bank crashed down in August with a deficiency of six millions, throwing commercial affairs into wild confusion. The directors were afterwards brought to justice, and sentenced to penal servitude for fraud; but that brought no help to the luckless shareholders. The bank not being a limited liability company, the courts decreed that the whole deficiency was recoverable from the shareholders, irrespectively of the amount of their holdings; even when they were merely trustees under marriage and other settlements, deriving no personal profit from shares registered in their names. This was the cause of so much unmerited suffering and so seriously affected the credit of other banks, whereof few were constituted under the Limited Liability Acts, that in the following year Sir Stafford Northcote passed an Act enabling such concerns to be reconstituted and registered afresh with limited liability.

Failure of the City of Glasgow Bank, 1878.

This disaster served to accelerate the decline which had been affecting trade affairs during the preceding two years. In most industries the depression ran its usual course, recovery setting in as the effect of over-speculation and over-production ceased to be felt; but agriculture continued to droop under the withering effect of foreign competition. Hitherto the wants of a rapidly increasing population had kept pace with increasing foreign supplies, and there had been no sensible reduction in prices, even when Chancellor Lowe, in the fervour of fiscal pedantry, struck off in 1869 the shilling registration duty on wheat imports. But the world had now awoke to the profit to be made in the free British market; production was stimulated in India and Russia; new corn lands began to be opened up in both North and

Agricultural depression, 1876–1900.

South America—tracts of virgin soil almost without limit, requiring no manure nor nicety of rotation for years to come. The extension of telegraphs kept the foreign exporter momentarily informed of the state of British markets; accelerated transport enabled him to time his consignments to a nicety. The consequence was that, whereas in 1846 the imports of corn and flour amounted to only 17 lb. per head of the population of the United Kingdom, which was then about 27,000,000, it had risen in 1879 to 189 lb. per head of a population numbering nearly 35,000,000. The same agencies, aided by other scientific appliances, facilitated the transport of more perishable food material—meat, eggs, dairy produce, &c.—until the British farmer was beset in every branch of his industry. Moreover, all this foreign produce could be laid at our doors at prices far below those which had hitherto regulated agricultural rents.

The result of this process brought about, before the end of the century, a far-reaching, deep-searching change in the rural community of England and Scotland. The first classes to feel the pinch were the farmers, whose margin of income, after paying rent and the labour bill, was greatly curtailed or disappeared altogether; and those of the rural clergy, whose tithes in England and stipend in Scotland were regulated by the price of cereals. Next, the landowner had to reduce his rents, and being powerless to abate the cost of maintenance, fixed charges and public burdens, the whole abatement, averaging roughly from 25 to 30 per cent. on the gross rental, came as a reduction of his free income, which on heavily mortgaged estates sometimes ceased to exist. All this told with cruel severity upon the owners of moderate-sized estates, many of whom had to sever a connection with the land dating back for centuries, to forgo the return from funds liberally invested in improvements during the good times, to sell such farms as they could find purchasers for, and, failing that, to shut up their country houses and live cheaply elsewhere. Only very large landowners, with estates lightly mortgaged, or those deriving income from mineral royalties or town property, could maintain their former rate of expenditure.

The only class wholly dependent on agriculture which did not suffer from the altered conditions were the farm labourers, at least in those districts where farms did not go derelict for want of tenants on any terms, as was sometimes the case on the heavy wheat-growing lands of East Anglia. Mining and industrial centres were drawing away the surplus, and far more than the surplus, rural population; to get his work done at all the farmer had to pay higher wages than ever, while cheaper food placed the workman and his family in easier circumstances than they had ever enjoyed before. That was the one bright feature in the otherwise dismal prospect.

Active, sanguine Liberals regarded with indifference the social changes being wrought in rural England and Scotland; they even derived satisfaction from the dislocation of the old ties between landlord and tenant, rejoicing in the decline of territorial influence and making political capital out of the adversity of the once prosperous farmer class. The wealth of the country was growing—did not the income-tax returns prove that? They felt no apprehension for the effect upon the stamina and physique of the people arising from the decay of their primary and healthiest industry, nor for conditions tending to render the country wholly dependent upon foreign food supplies. They lectured the farmers upon their want of enterprise and skill (Gladstone advised them to grow strawberries for jam); they denounced the landlords as selfish parasites who neither toiled nor spun.

Now none had been more closely identified with landed estate, none had esteemed its rights more sacred or exercised territorial influence more effectively, than the great Whig magnates, of whom the Liberals were the political heirs. But the Whigs had embarked on a current which was steadily effacing the old landmarks, and they had to travel at the pace decreed by the captain of the vessel. The real, though not at the moment the nominal, captain was Gladstone, who, having professed in turn the creeds of High Tory, Conservative, Peelite and Liberal, now stood forth as leader of the Radicals. The supreme end to attain was the overthrow of the Conservative Government,

notwithstanding that of late they had, in his judgment, adopted a sounder policy than before. In private correspondence he revealed himself as the keen party tactician, reserving the profession of lofty principles till the rise of the curtain.

"Salisbury's speech," he wrote to Lord Granville on 6th August 1879, "indicates . . . that they intend sailing on a quiet tack. Having proved their spirit, they will now show their moderation. . . . In my view that means that they will not supply any new matter of such severe condemnation as what they have already furnished. Therefore my idea is, we should keep the old alive and warm. . . . It seems to me good policy to join on the proceedings of 1876–79 by a continuous process to the dissolution." [1]

It mattered nothing to this fiery partisan that the Queen's Ministers were, by his own admission, taking an unobjectionable course; it never occurred to him, or, if it did so, he brushed aside the thought, that in foreign policy the Ministry of the day is entitled to support, or at least forbearance, from all patriotic members of Parliament. Lord Beaconsfield's foreign policy seemed to Gladstone the most vulnerable joint in his harness; he would assail it with all the force at his command; and if a damaging blow could be dealt at the same time against the land-owning interest (so incorrigibly conservative since the repeal of the corn laws), so much more would be gained for the Liberal party.

The Earl of Dalkeith [2] was member for Midlothian, son and heir of the Duke of Buccleuch, who was at that time the most notable Scottish peer, of immense influence and popularity north of the Tweed, and leader of the Conservative party in Scotland. Gladstone had been the Duke's colleague in Peel's Cabinet; it was to encounter this doughty chieftain on his own ground that he set out from Liverpool on 24th November 1879. He was in his seventy-first year, yet he entered upon the memorable Midlothian campaign with the energy, confidence and powers of endurance of seven-and-twenty. Nor entered upon it only; between his first

First Midlothian Campaign, Nov.–Dec. 1879.

[1] Morley's *Gladstone*, ii. 587.
[2] Succeeded as sixth Duke of Buccleuch in 1884.

speech in Edinburgh on 25th November, and his last in Glasgow on 5th December, he maintained unvarying vigour, addressing sometimes two and three monster meetings in a single day, making each speech a consecutive chapter in one long and fiery indictment of the foreign policy and financial principles of the Government. His audiences were composed in about equal proportion of town-dwellers and agriculturists, neither of whom it was difficult to dazzle with invective directed against the authors of the Berlin treaty, and the Afghan and Zulu campaigns, matters far beyond the grasp of ordinary citizens. Both of these classes were in the mood for discontent; the crash of the City of Glasgow Bank in the previous year had given a shock to credit extending far beyond the immediate victims of that disaster. Agriculturists especially, suffering the first spasm of bewilderment caused by the sudden fall in the price of produce owing to foreign competition, were disposed to accept almost any remedies proffered for their plight, and what remedy presents itself so readily as a change of Government? *Felix opportunitate*—what might have passed away as mere "drenching rhetoric,"[1] became, through the temperament of Gladstone's hearers and, let it be avowed, through his own commanding presence, magnetic phrase and flashing eye, eloquence of irresistible persuasion. "To think of the campaign without the scene," says Gladstone's biographer, "is as who should read a play by candle-light among the ghosts of an empty theatre."[2]

The Midlothian campaign signalised a new era in platform oratory. Throughout the winter months of 1879–80 Ministerialists and the Opposition bombarded each other in all parts of the country. "It was estimated," observed the *Annual Register*, "that in the course of this recess more speeches had been made by Cabinet Ministers than in all the recesses of other parliaments put together."[3]

[1] "It certainly is a relief that this drenching rhetoric has at length ceased; but I have never read a word of it. *Satis eloquentiæ, sapientiæ parum.*"—Lord Beaconsfield to Gathorne Hardy, 10th December 1879.

[2] Morley's *Gladstone*, ii. 594.

[3] *Ann. Reg.*, 1880, p. 5. Members of Parliament know to their cost that the demand for speech-making in the holidays shows no sign of slackening.

Parliament met on 5th February 1880, in the shadow of impending dissolution, which could not be postponed beyond another twelvemonth; nor was there any wish in the Cabinet to wait till all the sand had run out. Beaconsfield was waiting only for a propitious moment to go to the country. Such a moment it was not easy to find, seeing that Northcote had to provide for a deficit of £3,000,000, and Ireland was in the grip of something ominously suggestive of famine. Still the auspicious turn of a couple of by-elections in February[1] tempted the party Whips to forget how fallacious is augury from "test elections," and relying on their assurance, the Prime Minister announced on 8th March that the dissolution would take place so soon as the necessary money votes had been taken. He cast his election manifesto in the form of a letter to the Duke of Marlborough, Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland. Moved by the unquiet condition of that country, by Charles Stewart Parnell's outspoken declaration of war to the Union, and by symptoms of coquetry with Home Rule on the part of certain Liberal members, he put Ireland in the forefront of his appeal to the constituencies.

Dissolution of Parliament, March 1880.

"A danger, in its ultimate results scarcely less disastrous than pestilence and famine . . . distracts that country. A portion of its population is attempting to sever the Constitutional tie which unites it to Great Britain in that bond which has favoured the power and prosperity of both. It is to be hoped that all men of light and leading will resist this destructive doctrine. The strength of the nation depends on the unity of feeling which should pervade the United Kingdom and its wide-spread dependencies. . . . And yet there are some who challenge the expediency of the Imperial character of this realm. Having attempted and failed to enfeeble our Colonies by their policy of decomposition, they may perhaps now recognise in the disintegration of the United Kingdom a mode which will not only accomplish, but precipitate their purpose."

The immediate effect of this challenge was to throw the whole Irish vote against the Ministerial candidates, not

[1] In Liverpool, where Lord Ramsay failed to win the seat, although he secured the solid Irish vote by promising to support Mr. Shaw's motion for an inquiry into the question of Home Rule for Ireland; and in Southwark, where Mr. Clarke (now the Rt. Hon. Sir E. Clarke, K.C.) polled more votes than a Liberal and a Labour opponent combined.

only in Ireland, but in English and Scottish constituencies, in some of which it had become the deciding factor at elections. The country, as a whole, did not respond to Beaconsfield's warning. Gladstone derided it as "terrifying insinuations," and went off to light a second blaze in Midlothian.[1] Englishmen who would have rallied to the defence of the Union could not realise, as yet, that it was in any jeopardy, and drew assurance from Lord Hartington's address to his Lancashire constituents.

"No patriotic purpose is, in my opinion, gained by the use of the language of exaggeration in describing the Irish agitation for Home Rule. I believe the demand so described to be impracticable; and, considering that any concession, or appearance of concession, in this direction would be mischievous in its effects to the prosperity of Ireland as well as that of England and Scotland, I have consistently opposed it in office and in opposition, and I shall continue to oppose it."

Time was to show whose foresight was the more penetrating—Beaconsfield's, whose years were already numbered, or Hartington's, for whom many sessions of stress and strain were yet in store. But of that hereafter; what falls to be recorded here is the total rout of the Conservative forces at the polls.

In the old Parliament the strength of parties had been—

Conservatives . .	351
Liberals	250
Home Rulers . .	51

Mr. Gladstone's second administration, April 1880–85.

In the new Parliament the numbers were—

Liberals	349
Conservatives . .	243
Home Rulers . .	60

The Cabinet resigned on 20th April, and Mr. Gladstone returned from Windsor on the 25th as First Lord of the Treasury and Chancellor of the Exchequer.

[1] Four years later Gladstone acknowledged his error. "I frankly admit," he said, addressing a meeting in Edinburgh on 1st Sept. 1884, "I had much on my hands connected with the doings of the Beaconsfield Government in almost every quarter of the world, and I did not know—no one knew—the severity of the crisis that was already swelling upon the horizon, and that shortly after rushed upon us like a flood."

CHAPTER IV

War with Afghanistan — Treaty of Gundamuk — Massacre of Sir Louis Cavagnari and escort—Action of Charasiab—And of Sherpur—British disaster at Maiwand—Roberts's march from Cabul to Candahar—"The Great Trek"—Natal proclaimed a British Colony—Annexation of the Orange River Territory—Dutch African Republic founded—Annexation of the Transvaal—Sir Bartle Frere—Invasion of Zululand—Massacre of Isandhlana—Defeat of the Zulus at Ulundi—Affairs of the Transvaal—Revolt of the Boers—British reverse at Laing's Nek—Disaster of Majuba—Convention of Pretoria.

THE most telling count in Gladstone's indictment of the Beaconsfield administration was that which charged it with having "embarked the Crown and people in an unjust war—the Afghan War, that is full of mischief, if not of positive danger, to India." It differed from the other counts in having better foundation in fact; for if misguidance in public affairs is to be reckoned synonymous with misdoing, then the management of our relations with the Court of Afghanistan must be numbered among the misdeeds of the British Government. But the blame, if blame there be, rests not with one administration more than with another; rather it is the fruit of the party system, which can ill be reconciled with continuity in dealing with foreign powers.

War with Afghanistan, 1878–80.

When the conquest of Khiva by Russia in 1873 brought their outposts within 400 miles of the British frontier and well-nigh into actual contact with the northern frontier of Afghanistan, the Amir Sher Ali, prudently enough, sought for assurance of support from the Indian Government in the event of his territory and independence being threatened. His overtures were rejected. Sir John Lawrence, Viceroy from 1863 to 1868, had inaugurated the policy of "masterly inactivity" and non-interference with the north-western frontier tribes; and so faithfully did Lord Northbrook adhere to the precepts of his great predecessor in office, that he resigned the Viceroyalty in 1875, rather than

yield to pressure from the India Office (at that time administered by Lord Salisbury) that the Amir should be induced to receive a British agent at Cabul.

Northbrook was succeeded in the Viceroyalty by Lord Lytton, only son of the novelist, and himself a brilliant writer in prose and verse. Disraeli enjoyed a well-earned reputation for discerning capacity in men not suspected of possessing it; but, judged by the result, his choice of Lytton can hardly be reckoned among his most felicitous appointments. A gifted poet was hardly the kind of person likely to concentrate all his faculties upon details of administration—too likely, perhaps, to embark upon grand schemes involving extension of territory.[1]

After rejecting the Amir's overtures in 1873, and before leaving office in 1874, Gladstone's government had obtained explicit assurance from Russia that she recognised Afghanistan as a State outside the sphere of her influence and within that of Great Britain. But in 1878, when war between Great Britain and Russia seemed inevitable, the strategic importance of Afghanistan as a base of offensive operations could not be overlooked by either Government. Active hostilities would have voided the understanding between the two Powers; wherefore the Russian Government cannot be held to have acted in bad faith when they responded to the passage of the Dardanelles by the British fleet, and the despatch of 7000 Indian troops to the Mediterranean,[2] by inducing Sher Ali to receive a Russian mission under

[1] After his resignation in April 1880, Lytton wrote to Sir James Fitzjames Stephen about "all that Providence has taken from the fancy prospect I had painted on the blank wall of the future of bequeathing to India the supremacy of Central Asia and the revenues of a first-class Power." (*Lord Lytton's Indian Administration*, by Lady Betty Balfour, p. 422.) In justice to Lytton, however, it must be recorded that, in adopting an active policy towards Afghanistan, he was only carrying out the spirit of the instructions he received on appointment. "The maintenance in Afghanistan of a strong and friendly power has at all times been the object of British policy. The attainment of this object is now to be considered with due reference to the situation created by the recent and rapid advance of the Russian army in Central Asia towards the northern frontiers of India. Her Majesty's Government cannot view with complete indifference the probable influence of that situation upon the uncertain character of an Oriental chief, whose ill-defined dominions are thus brought within a steadily narrowing circle, between the conflicting pressures of two great military empires, one of which expostulates and remains passive, whilst the other apologises and continues to move forward."

[2] See p. 56, *supra*.

General Stolietoff at Cabul. Upon this Lord Lytton peremptorily called upon the Amir to receive a British mission, indicating that a refusal would be regarded as an unfriendly act, which, in the language of diplomacy, is a synonym for hostility. No doubt Lytton welcomed the opportunity of retrieving what he held to have been lost by the "masterly inactivity" school.[1]

"If the Ameer had not been long ago completely alienated by the systematic stupidity and insincerity of our policy, I cannot doubt but what the forced presence of a Russian mission at Cabul, and its probable demands, would ere this have elicited from him some overture or appeal to us. . . . I believe it to be quite possible to retrieve the whole situation, and secure, once for all and for ever, that hold upon Afghanistan which is essential to the safety of our present frontier. . . . If Sher Ali is not, for any practical purpose, *with* us, he should at once be treated as, for all practical purposes, *against* us. All experience shows, I think, that the only safe policy for India, in the presence of any recognised danger, is the policy of *venienti occurrite morbo*. . . . There could not be a more fatal delusion than that on which Lord Lawrence based his Afghan policy, and which was cherished to the last by Norman and his other disciples. . . . Any present attempt to re-establish influence over the Ameer will entirely depend on the cogency with which we appeal to his *fears*. From his hopes we have nothing to expect. We must make him unmistakably aware of our power to injure or destroy him, of our determination to do so if pushed to it in defence of our own interests, and of Russia's inability to protect him from the consequence of that hostility on our part which she has been enticing him to provoke."[2]

In these sentences are displayed as clearly as may be the principles actuating Lord Lytton's policy on the north-western frontier—principles differing as widely as possible from those which guided Sir John Lawrence. One should be very slow to express dissent from the views of Lawrence, who could strike hard and straight enough when occasion

[1] "It is now useless to recall the history of Sher Ali's long-growing hostility to us, nurtured under our 'masterly inactivity' system. . . . The present most injudicious action of Russia fortunately affords us a convenient opportunity for making, without loss of dignity, and under somewhat more favourable conditions, another—and as I conceive it must be a *last*—attempt to establish more satisfactory relations with the present Amir. . . . Failing our efforts . . . we must, I think, without hesitation . . . upset Sher Ali or pare his claws." (Lord Lytton to the Secretary of State, 3rd August 1878.)

[2] Lord Lytton to the Secretary of State, 17th August 1878. (Gathorne Hardy's *Memoir of the Earl of Cranbrook*, ii. 87.) A long and able letter, to be read attentively by any one who desires a clear understanding of Lytton's action and motives in this much disputed matter.

arose.[1] Certainly Lawrence denounced in vehement terms the course of action which landed Lytton in hostilities with Afghanistan, and was chairman of a committee formed to resist the policy of the India Office in this very crisis;[2] nevertheless the Indian Government could not passively acquiesce in the presence of a Russian mission at Cabul, unless a corresponding privilege were conceded to Great Britain. Lytton, therefore, and the Government which he represented, must be held to have taken a right line in the crisis which had been brought about by the refusal of their predecessors to entertain overtures from Sher Ali, and had thrown him into the arms of Russia.

On 14th August Lytton wrote to the Amir announcing that he had deputed Sir Neville Chamberlain, Commander-in-Chief of the Madras army, to proceed to Cabul as envoy to arrange for the reception of a British mission. The Amir received the letter on 17th August, and, after consulting with General Stolietoff, decided to decline to receive the British envoy, but neglected to communicate his decision to the Viceroy. He sent no reply until 6th October (received by the Viceroy on 19th), by which time Chamberlain's mission, with an escort of 400 men, had been met in the Khyber Pass by an overwhelming force of Afridis and Afghans, and refused admission to the Amir's dominions. The Indian Government proposed to meet this affront by immediate invasion of Afghanistan; but Lord Cranbrook (who had succeeded Lord Salisbury at the India Office) required that an opportunity for apology should be given to the Amir. Accordingly an ultimatum was sent to the Amir on 2nd November, demanding acceptance of the British conditions by the twentieth. No notice having been taken of this, the troops which had already been massed on the frontier[3] moved forward in three columns under the respective command of Major-General Sir Samuel Browne, Major-General Donald Stewart, and Brigadier-General Frederick Roberts.[4] On the 22nd November Ali Musjid was bombarded and captured; on 2nd December

[1] See vol. ii. pp. 204, 268.
[2] Lawrence died on 26th June 1879.
[3] 35,000 men with 144 guns.
[4] Now Earl Roberts of Candahar, Pretoria and Waterford.

Roberts forced the Afghan position on the Peiwar Khotal, and on the 13th Sher Ali fled from Kabul, where his son Yakub Khán assumed the government.[1] Roberts then formally annexed the Kuram district and entered the Khoost territory on 3rd January 1879. On 7th January General Stewart took possession of Candahar without opposition. The dashing rapidity of these successes was just the thing required to impress for the moment a nation of soldiers like the Afghans, and, the Russian mission having been withdrawn from Cabul, Yakub Khán opened negotiations with the Indian Government, and was recognised as Amir by the Viceroy on 8th May. On the 26th of that month the first stage of the second Afghan war was brought to a close by the treaty of Gundamuk, which provided for the residence of a British agent at Cabul, the defence of the Amir's dominions against foreign aggression, the retention by Great Britain of the Khyber and Michni Passes and the districts of Pishin, Sibi and Kuram, and the payment to the Amir of a subsidy of £60,000.[2]

Closed, therefore, that incident, we may hope. Instead of a Russian mission at Cabul there is a British one: the Afghans have received a smart lesson upon which empire—the Tzar's or the Queen's—they shall rely for maintaining their independence, and the handsome subsidy should be good guarantee against the Amir coquetting with any other power. Sir Louis Cavagnari took up his residence at Cabul in terms of the treaty; and, so pacific was the outlook, that his escort was limited to five-and-twenty cavalry and fifty infantry of the Guides Corps.

Aye, but Cavagnari was accompanied as far as the Shutargardan Pass by one who felt sore misgiving as to the security of the mission.

"My staff and I," wrote General Roberts, "dined that evening [15th July] with the mission. After dinner I was asked to propose the health of Cavagnari and those with him, but somehow I did not feel equal to the task; I was so thoroughly depressed, and

[1] Sher Ali died on 20th February following.

[2] Afghanistan was not much more than a geographical expression denoting a region comprising several provinces more or less completely subject to the central authority of the Amir of Cabul, and with frontiers very indefinitely drawn.

my mind was filled with such gloomy forebodings as to the fate of these fine fellows, that I could not utter a word. Like many others, I thought that peace had been signed too quickly, before, in fact, we had instilled that awe of us into the Afghan nation which would have been the only reliable guarantee for the safety of the mission."[1]

Roberts's presage was only too well grounded. The treaty of peace had been hurried on to satisfy the instant demands of the British Cabinet. The Afghans, although worsted in every encounter in the late brief campaign, had not suffered so severely as to obliterate the memories of 1842, when Elphinstone's column was annihilated in the Khurd Cabul and Jagdalak passes. Even if Yakub Khán honestly desired to observe the treaty, which is very doubtful, he was powerless to control his warlike subjects. On 3rd September they rose and massacred Louis Cavagnari and his whole escort.

Massacre of Cavagnari and his escort, 3rd Sept. 1879.

The columns of Generals Stewart and Browne had been broken up: General Roberts only had a force at Kuram ready to take the field—7500 men with 22 guns—with which he marched at once upon Cabul. He was met at Kushi by the Amir Yakub Khán, with assurance of profound regret for the massacre, which he declared had been the act of mutinous troops, and he inflicted upon Roberts his embarrassing presence during the rest of the advance, keeping the enemy constantly informed of the strength and disposition of the British column.

On 6th October Roberts engaged the Afghan army at Charasiab, and although he had but 4000 men and 18 guns in the field, he routed the enemy, taking from him 78 guns. On the 13th he entered Cabul, and Yakub Khán abdicated. Roberts's task, however, was not complete. The tribes, sinking their private feuds, rose for a religious war, and massed for the recapture of Cabul. Operations against them continued from 12th to 23rd December, when in a final encounter at Sherpur they were thoroughly beaten and dispersed.

Actions of Charasiab, 6th Oct., and Sherpur, 23rd Dec. 1879.

[1] *Forty-one Years in India*, ii. 177.

It now became momentous matter for decision what was to be the future constitution of this fine territory, more than double the extent of the United Kingdom, whereof the Queen's troops had overthrown the government. Unanimity in favour of any individual ruler was out of the question among tribes who were chronically at war with each other; but the chief most likely to be received with most general favour was Abdur Rahman, legitimate heir of Dost Mahomed, whom Lord Auckland had so unwisely deposed in 1840.[1] Him, therefore, Lord Lytton decided to support as Amir of Cabul, the northern province of Afghanistan, while Candahar was to be incorporated in the Indian system as a protected state with a British garrison, and connected with India by a strategic railway.

Unfortunately, in no part of the Empire can diplomatic negotiations, however delicate, or military dispositions, however critical, be screened off from the cockpit of party in England. Consequently, when Gladstone became Prime Minister in April 1880, he, his Cabinet and his party were so deeply committed to the reversal of the frontier policy of their predecessors in office that Lord Lytton resigned the Viceroyalty, and Lord Ripon was appointed in his place, with instructions to resume the rôle of "masterly inactivity." The elevation of Abdur Rahman to the throne was confirmed, indeed, but the retention of Candahar was cancelled, the construction of the frontier railway was stopped,[2] and the evacuation of Afghanistan was insisted upon so precipitately as to give the impression of what is vulgarly known as "scuttle."

Before the evacuation could be carried out, another claimant to the throne of Afghanistan had taken the field. Abdur Rahman was proclaimed Amir of Northern Afghanistan on 22nd July; on the 4th Brigadier-General Burrows had been sent out from Candahar to intercept the advance of Ayub Khân, son of the deceased Amir Sher Ali, who had gathered to his standard tribesmen

[1] See vol. ii. p. 124.

[2] Only to be hastily resumed in 1885, when Russian troops came into conflict with the Afghans at Penjdeh; Lytton's view of the strategic importance of this railway to Quettah being thereby vindicated.

in at least as great numbers as those who supported Abdur Rahman. The outstanding feature of Anglo-Indian warfare has always been the manner in which British troops, and Native troops commanded by British officers, have met and overcome armies enormously outnumbering them. But in war, as in other mundane matters, fortune is fickle; and Burrows, a daring and experienced commander, was doomed to disaster similar to that which Holkar inflicted upon Monson's column in 1804, and to that in which these very Afghan tribesmen annihilated Elphinstone's army in 1842. On 27th July Burrows, with a brigade only 2476 strong, greatly encumbered with a heavy baggage train, suddenly found himself in the presence of 20,000 to 25,000 Afghans near Maiwand.[1] Like Wellesley at Assaye, he judged it more prudent to attack at once than to attempt retreat. The ground had not been reconnoitred, else he would have moved by his right to occupy Maiwand. As it was, his slender line was hopelessly outflanked from the first, and enfiladed by the enemy's artillery, which proved too much for the nerves of the Native troops. In the terrible confusion which followed, 20 British officers, 914 men, and hundreds of servants and camp followers were killed, besides 9 officers and 166 men wounded and missing; the remnants of the column fled in disorder to Candahar, leaving seven guns in the enemy's hands. General Primrose, commanding in Candahar, hastily—too hastily it was thought—evacuated the cantonments and prepared to defend the city, to which Ayub Khán laid siege early in August.

Defeat of the British at Maiwand, 27th July 1880.

The news of a British defeat flew from valley to valley and from village to village, rousing the eager clansmen to sink their private feuds in common cause against the Christian. Intense anxiety prevailed at Cabul, for Lord Ripon was suspected, unjustly as it turned out, of being so anxious for peace at any price as to be willing to allow the calamity at Maiwand to go unavenged, so as the evacuation might be accomplished. But Ripon in India breathed a different

[1] Burrows had received the most conflicting reports about Ayub's strength, which, in the end, he greatly underrated.

spirit from Gladstone in Midlothian. He had to overcome the opposition of some of his own council before he telegraphed on 3rd August countermanding the withdrawal of the Cabul field force and authorising the despatch of a column to the relief of Candahar. To the command of that column General Roberts was appointed, and his march from Cabul to Candahar of 313 miles in 22 days through a difficult and hostile country, ranks with that of Sir Donald Stewart from Candahar to Cabul earlier in the year among the most masterly episodes in military history. The strength of the column was 2562 British troops, 7151 Natives, with 273 British officers and 18 guns; in all 11,233 combatants, with upwards of 8000 followers and 10,300 horses and gun-mules.

General Roberts's march from Cabul to Candahar, 9th–31st Aug. 1880.

On arriving at Candahar on 31st August, General Roberts, although of junior rank to General Primrose, in accordance with instructions received from Simla superseded him in command of the army in Southern Afghanistan.[1]

Roberts allowed no grass to grow under his feet. He had the whole of his forces—3800 British and 11,000 Natives, with 36 guns—under arms at daybreak on 1st September, and prepared to attack the enemy, who was in position round the village of Pir Paimal. After some hard fighting, Ayub Khán's army was completely defeated and dispersed, his camp and baggage captured, and also thirty-six guns, including two lost by the Horse Artillery at Maiwand.

Ayub Khán being thus driven off the field, Abdur

[1] It would sweeten the historian's task were he to record only the doings of capable and successful men. It is an ungrateful, but imperative, duty to chronicle error and incapacity also; wherefore reference must be made to Roberts's description of the state of affairs as he found it in Candahar on his arrival. "I confess," he wrote, "to being very much surprised, not to use a stronger expression, at the demoralised condition of the greater part of the garrison. There were some notable exceptions, but the general bearing of the troops reminded me of the people at Agra in 1857. They seemed to consider themselves hopelessly defeated, and were utterly despondent; they never even hoisted the Union Jack until the relieving force was close at hand. . . . For British soldiers to have contemplated the possibility of Candahar being taken by an Afghan army, showed what a miserable state of depression and demoralisation they were in." (*Forty-one Years in India*, ii. 357.) Personal and professional considerations restrained Lord Roberts from attributing this condition of things to its true cause; but readers will have no difficulty in recognising the dispirited bearing of the subordinate ranks as the result of defective qualities in the chief command.

Rahman was left to administer his dominion, which he did with vigour and ability. Ayub, indeed, took advantage of the withdrawal of British troops to reoccupy Candahar in July 1881; but Abdur Rahman marched against him, routed his tribesmen, captured all his guns, drove him across the Persian frontier, and thus Northern and Southern Afghanistan became reunited under a single Amir.

The north-west frontier of India having become a party question in England, it is not unprofitable, even in retrospect of thirty years, to consider which was the wiser policy—the *venienti occurrite morbo* of my Lords Beaconsfield, Cranbrook and Lytton, or the *laissez faire* of Gladstone, Lawrence and Ripon. The original mistake seems to have been committed by the Gladstone administration in 1873, when Sher Ali's overtures were rejected, with the inevitable result of throwing him into the arms of Russia. Lytton was forced to take action in 1878 by the forward movement of Russia and the reception of her envoy at Cabul; but he yielded too readily to the opinion strongly held by many Anglo-Indians, that the Russian advance should be countered by a corresponding advance of the British frontier. To disintegrate Afghanistan by establishing a British garrison in Candahar was the surest way to destroy the efficacy of the buffer between the two empires; and Lord Hartington, succeeding Lord Cranbrook at the India Office, acted wisely in restoring the *status quo* and promoting the spirit of nationality among the warlike Highlanders of the Amir.

While recognising the justice of Gladstone's denunciation of Lytton's frontier policy, and approving the wisdom of his Cabinet in reversing, or at least arresting it, one has to cast about for words which shall be consistent with the reverence due to a great statesman and scrupulously righteous man, and at the same time adequately reprobate the author of that inversion of truth which he thrust upon the Midlothian electors as the right view of another frontier war into which the Government had been drawn in 1879.

"For forty years," Gladstone admitted two years later, "I have always regarded the South African problem as the one great unsolved, and perhaps insoluble, problem of our colonial system." Such dim discernment of the causes of

our quarrel with the great Zulu nation should have made even an Under-Secretary hesitate before daring to enlighten public opinion upon such a dark problem; but it never gave Gladstone pause. The war was in no sense popular: it might be made damaging to Ministers; uninstructed masses would detect no flaw in the impeachment, so forward fearlessly! Be hip and thigh the word!

Little wonder that Gladstone's biographer treats these Midlothian speeches in discreetly synthetic review.[1] Were the matter not so grave, did it not involve so deeply the honour of the Empire, and had not the electorate been so grievously misled in regard to it, some passages, grotesque in exaggeration, might be left in oblivion. Gladstone described the campaign against the Zulus as a wanton outrage upon a race "whose only purpose was to defend their hearths and homes with their naked bodies," and the annexation of the Transvaal as "the invasion of a free people."

The facts were these: First, as to annexation. In 1834 the emancipation of the slaves in Cape Colony bitterly offended the Dutch Boers, descendants of the original settlers, who showed their resentment by selling their farms at any sacrifice and migrating across the Orange River, the north-eastern frontier of Cape Colony, where some of their countrymen

The Great Trek, 1834–37.

[1] "Physical resources had much to do with the effect; his overflowing vivacity, the fine voice and flashing eye and a whole frame in free, ceaseless, natural and spontaneous motion. . . . I need not here go through the long list of topics." (Morley's *Gladstone*, ii. 594.) It would be idle to repine at the system which enlists in the service of party the transcendent faculties of the most powerful men in the State—faculties which, if they were applied to minimising, instead of exaggerating, points of difference would render that State indomitable. We have Gladstone's own word for it that he considered the responsibility of statesmen in opposition to be less grave than that of those in office—in other words, that he claimed a license of speech for the purpose of embarrassing the Sovereign's Ministers exceeding that permissible in Ministers themselves. In January 1883, when ill-health obliged him to abandon a third Midlothian campaign, he wrote to the Queen: "In your Majesty's very kind reference to Mr. Gladstone's visits to Midlothian, and to his own observations on the 24th April 1880, your Majesty remarked that he had said he did not then think himself a responsible person. He prays leave to fill up the outline which these words convey by saying he at that time (to the best of his recollection) humbly submitted to your Majesty his admission that he must personally bear the consequences of all that he had said, and that he thought some things suitable to be said by a person out of office which could not suitably be said by a person in office; also that . . . the responsibilities of the two positions severally were different."

were already settled as farmers. Other bands of emigrants pushed farther north, crossing the Vaal River, where they attacked the Zulu chief Moselekatze, driving him across the Limpopo. But more formidable than Moselekatze was Dingaan, another Zulu chief who ruled in eastern Zululand, and over part of what is now the colony of Natal. By his disciplined hordes of splendid fighting men the Boers were in danger of being overpowered, hundreds of them being massacred in 1838, when they were saved by the prowess and sagacity of one of their number, Andries Pretorius, under whose leadership Dingaan was utterly defeated in 1840. Dingaan was murdered soon after, and peace having been made with his successor Panda, a Boer republic was proclaimed in Natal.

Natal proclaimed a British colony, 8th Aug. 1843.

Now in Natal, which received its name from its discovery by Vasco da Gama on Christmas Day 1497, a small settlement had been founded already at Durban by Lieutenant Farwell in 1831; consequently in 1843 the Boers were forced to retire again across the Drakensberg, and Natal was proclaimed a British colony.

The retreating Boers divided into two bands; one settling in the Orange River territory, the other resuming occupation of the district between the Vaal River and the Limpopo, known as the Transvaal. The Orange River settlers soon came into conflict with the Griquas, who were under treaty of alliance with the Cape Colony. The Governor, Sir Peregrine Maitland, one of Wellington's companions in arms,[1] sent a force to support the Griquas, which defeated the Boers at Zwart Kopjes in 1845. Three years later, another Peninsular and Waterloo veteran, Sir Harry Smith,[2] was Governor of the Cape Colony. Despairing of any prospect of peaceful government in the Orange River territory, he issued a proclamation declaring it to be under British dominion. Pretorius at once took up arms and

Annexation of the Orange River Territory, 1848.

[1] He served throughout the Peninsular campaign, and commanded the 1st Brigade of Guards at Waterloo.

[2] He was the first British officer to enter Paris on 7th July 1815.

expelled the British resident from Bloemfontein. Smith led a column of six companies of regular infantry and two squadrons of Cape Mounted Rifles, stormed the Boer position at Boom Plaatz and drove Pretorius across the Vaal, where he founded the Dutch African Republic.[1] In 1852 the young State received from the British Government guarantee of autonomy and independence; but in the following year its two most capable leaders, Pretorius and Potgieter, died, and public affairs began to go from bad to worse. About the time when Lord Carnarvon returned to the Colonial Office in 1874, the Republic had fallen into hopeless financial embarrassment, the community had lapsed into lawlessness, and the neighbouring Zulus had become boldly aggressive. Such was the tenor of Sir Theophilus Shepstone's report when he was sent in 1876 to inquire into the condition of the Transvaal.[2] As he could discern no prospect of the Republic recovering equilibrium, but much danger to British communities in South Africa from its defenceless and anarchic condition, he acted within the powers committed to him by formally annexing the Transvaal in April 1877. Apparently this was done with the assent of the Boer leaders and people, Shepstone assuring them that they would receive a representative constitution, with the advantage that, as British subjects, they would be protected from their dangerous neighbours the Zulus. Howbeit, no sooner had the Union Jack been hoisted at Pretoria than an agitation against annexation was started among the Boers; President Burgers, who at first had recommended his people to accept it loyally, now changed his note and denounced it. Mr. Kruger and Dr. Jorisson were sent to London to convey a national protest, but Lord Carnarvon decided that he had to deal with nothing more than the factious opposition of a minority of the Boers, and told

Foundation of the Dutch African Republic, 1848.

[1] A title altered in 1858 to the South African Republic.

[2] Sir T. Shepstone (1817–1893), a remarkable Afrikander, who, starting in life as an interpreter at Cape Town, devoted himself to friendly intercourse with the native races and obtained great influence over them. He became secretary for native affairs in the Transvaal Government, and was constantly employed by the Colonial Office in important negotiations.

them the annexation was irrevocable. A second deputation met with no better encouragement from Sir Michael Hicks-Beach, both Ministers acting on the advice of Sir T. Shepstone and Sir Bartle Frere. In no other way can the government of a world-wide empire be conducted than by employing and relying upon trustworthy officials in remote provinces.

The mention of Sir Bartle Frere brings us to a course of events which culminated in war with the Zulus. This remarkable man was an old and tried servant of the State. Entering the Bombay civil service as a writer in 1834, he rose from post to post, having received the thanks of Parliament for his services under Sir John Lawrence during the Mutiny. He became Governor of Bombay 1862–67, and when appointed Governor of Cape Colony in 1877, became also the first High Commissioner of South Africa. He was in his sixty-third year. In India he had imbibed from his chief, Lawrence, views the very reverse of aggressive. An administrator of proved capacity, if ever a public servant's record entitled him to the confidence of his employers, Bartle Frere's was that record. Yet it was his misfortune to incur censure from the Conservative Ministers who appointed him, and dismissal by the Liberal Government that succeeded them.

Sir Bartle Frere, 1815–84.

Frere was invested with the powers of High Commissioner primarily to carry out a scheme whereon the Government had set its heart, namely, the federation of British South Africa; but his attention was diverted from that by circumstances of more pressing importance. Trouble between the Boers of the Transvaal and the powerful warlike nation of Zulus had arisen over a tract of land which Cetewayo, son of King Panda, had granted to the Boers as a reward for the extradition of two of his half-brothers who had taken refuge with them. This land had been divided into farms and built on by the Boers; but when Cetewayo succeeded Panda in 1872, he laid claim to the ground, on the plea that the grant was invalid, not having been confirmed by Panda and the Great Council of Chiefs. A Boundary Commission appointed by Sir Henry Bulwer, Governor of Natal, arbitrated unanimously in favour of the

Zulus;[1] but as the Boers were now British subjects, Frere, as High Commissioner, in confirming the award, made it a condition that the lives and property of white settlers on the disputed territory should be respected. In view of Cetewayo's truculent demeanour he felt little hope of maintaining peace with him; on 30th September 1878, he warned the Colonial Office that the state of affairs was critical, asked for reinforcements, and detained the regiments on the list for relief.

Now Sir Michael Hicks-Beach had received from Sir Henry Bulwer reports far less alarming than Frere's. Bulwer considered that the award of the Boundary Commission had restored Cetewayo's good-humour, and that he was not likely to cause much trouble to the British on his frontiers. Hicks-Beach therefore replied on 17th October that the Government could not see any need for reinforcing the command of Lord Chelmsford, and recommended prudence and forbearance as the best means of averting hostilities. To this Frere returned vigorous protest, reiterating his conviction that Cetewayo meant mischief, and declining to be responsible for the security of Natal unless his request for more troops were complied with. Sir Michael, feeling that he could no longer disregard the representations of the High Commissioner, sent reinforcements on 14th December, accompanied by earnest injunction that they were not to be used in aggressive operations, but only for the protection of the colonies.

So far, so good. The mere presence of a larger force of British troops might have kept the sanguinary Cetewayo quiet; but unfortunately Frere had not waited for the reply to his second request for reinforcements. Before it reached him he had presented an ultimatum to Cetewayo, demanding that the system of massacring his own subjects should be instantly discontinued, according to the conditions upon which Sir Theophilus Shepstone had allowed him to be crowned; that the military system, instituted or revived

[1] "No cession of territory was ever made by the Zulu people, and even if such a cession had been made by either Panda or Cetewayo, it would have been null and void unless confirmed by the voice of the nation according to the custom of the Zulus."

by him, involving the obligatory "washing of spears,"[1] should be altered to one to be approved by the British Government; that he should receive a British resident and be guided by his advice; that he should guarantee the protection of Christian missionaries and converts, and that certain offenders should be caught and surrendered, and indemnity paid for their outrages.[2]

A reply to this ultimatum (which Sir Bartle Frere delivered without consulting the Colonial Office) was required within thirty days. The expiry of that term (11th January 1879) coincided with the arrival of the reinforcements. A week earlier the High Commissioner notified to General Lord Chelmsford that Cetewayo must be compelled to comply with the terms of the ultimatum.

Accordingly, on 11th January 1879, British troops crossed the frontier in three columns, the Commander-in-Chief marching with Colonel Glyn's brigade, which crossed the Buffalo River at Rorke's Drift, and encamped at Isandhlana on the 21st. The strength of this column was 2100 British and 2000 Basuto levies. On the 22nd Chelmsford moved out and engaged what he believed to be the main body of the enemy, leaving his camp and baggage in charge of Colonel Pulleine, in whose support Colonel Durnford had brought up 3000 native levies from Rorke's Drift. But the precaution of "laagering" the waggons had been neglected, and when Chelmsford returned with Glyn's column, weary and hungry men, he found that his camp had been attacked and plundered by 20,000 Zulus, and that 800 British troops had been massacred, including Colonels Pulleine and Durnford. Chelmsford's remaining force was now in great peril. He had lost all his stores and ammunition, and if, as was pro-

Invasion of Zululand, 11th Jan. 1879.

Massacre of Isandhlana, 22nd Jan. 1879.

[1] Zulu bachelors were not allowed to marry until they had "washed their spears" in blood; it mattered not whose blood. In the absence of a regular foe, Christian converts were reckoned fair game, and the people of Natal lived in dread of a spear-washing raid when the supply of converts should run short. Hitherto Cetewayo's domestic policy had provided plenty of victims.

[2] One of these outrages involved violation of the frontier of Natal, two wives of the chief Sirayo having eloped with their lovers and sought refuge in Natal. Two of the chief's sons collected an armed band, followed the women, and murdered them.

bable, the enemy had overpowered the two subalterns who had been left to guard Rorke's Drift, with eighty men of the 24th Regiment, then his retreat was cut off. Retreat, however, must be attempted, and it was found that the worst disaster had been averted by the resourceful gallantry of the said subalterns—Lieutenant Chard, R.E., and Lieutenant Bromhead—who, having heard from some fugitives of the doings at Isandhlana, ten miles to the north, had thrown up a zariba of biscuit tins, bags, &c., and held 4000 victorious Zulus at bay by desperate musketry and bayonet work throughout the night.

Two of Chelmsford's columns having been thus disposed of, the third column under Colonel Wood[1] was earning a good account for itself, having successfully engaged a large body of Zulus near the Intamba Mountains, and then, on hearing of Chelmsford's misfortune, having fallen back to protect Utrecht. It was not till the middle of April that reinforcements began to arrive from England. By the end of May Chelmsford, having under his command 20,000 British and 4500 Colonial troops, resumed the invasion of Zululand, and on 4th July won the decisive victory of Ulundi, which practically brought the war to an end.[2]

Defeat of Zulus at Ulundi, 4th July 1879.

He was fortunate in having this opportunity of redeeming his professional reputation, for by this time Sir Garnet Wolseley actually had arrived in Cape Town to supersede him in the chief command. The news of Isandhlana arriving in England on 11th February, two days before the meeting of Parliament, convulsed the nation with a spasm of mingled shame and indignation. In both Houses motions of censure upon the Administration were moved—in the Lords on 25th March by Lord Lansdowne; in the Commons on the 27th by Sir Charles Dilke—but the

[1] Now Field-Marshal Sir Evelyn Wood.

[2] Cetewayo was sent as a State prisoner to Cape Town; but in 1882 a joint petition of Conservative and Liberal members of Parliament was presented to the Prime Minister praying for his release and restoration to the throne of Zululand. To the indignation of both British and Dutch Afrikanders, and to the dismay of the Zulus themselves, who dreaded above all things the return of this bloodthirsty tyrant, Gladstone acceded to the petition. An ill-judged favour, this, both to Cetewayo and his people. Civil war broke out, and after much bloodshed, Cetewayo fled to the protection of the British Resident at Ekowe, and died there in February 1884.

Colonial Secretary had anticipated the discussion, which turned chiefly on the merits of Sir Bartle Frere's actions, by addressing on 19th March a strong rebuke to the High Commissioner.[1] But having departed from customary practice by communicating to Parliament the terms of his rebuke, he firmly defended Frere; the only part of whose conduct he complained of was that he had brought matters to a crisis without the sanction of the Government. He had not censured Frere for incapacity, but for excess of zeal, and he refused to entertain the demand of the Opposition for his recall.

It was generally and not unnaturally expected, when the Liberal party were returned in the spring of 1880 with a clear majority of fifty over the joint total of Conservatives and Home Rulers, that one of their first acts would be to recall Sir Bartle Frere. It redounds more to the credit of Gladstone's courage than his consistency that he succeeded, not without difficulty, in dissuading his colleagues from that course, on the plea that Frere would now apply himself to furthering the scheme of federation with which he had been specially charged on his appointment. "Confederation," he said, "is the pole-star of the present action of our Government." But later in the summer, when the Cape Parliament declined to proceed with the federation scheme, Gladstone could no longer resist the clamour of the Radicals, and Frere was recalled by telegram on 28th July.

The treatment of Sir Bartle Frere by both Beaconsfield's government and Gladstone's was, and still remains, a matter for controversy. There is indeed much to be said on both sides. To Frere had been committed extraordinary powers to enable him to bring about federation, and, seeing that the telegraph did not then extend beyond Madeira, occasion might arise when he might rightly apply these powers without awaiting Colonial Office sanction. Did Cetewayo's unfriendly attitude constitute such an occasion? Apart from the danger to which the Free State and the Transvaal were

[1] "Her Majesty's Government have been unable to find in the documents you have placed before them that evidence of urgent necessity for immediate action which alone could justify you in taking, without their full knowledge and sanction, a course almost certain to result in a war which, as I had previously impressed upon you, every effort should have been used to avoid."

exposed, Cetewayo's methods of governing his own people were so horrible that they could not be tolerated on the borders of a British colony; but Sir Henry Bulwer, Bishop Colenso, and a minority of the colonists believed that the Zulus were amenable to reason and reform. Frere thought otherwise, and, though he had been a disciple of Lawrence and "masterly inactivity," he acted on Lytton's principle —*venienti occurrite morbo*—which would be undoubtedly and invariably the safest were the acquisition of territory the main object in view. It is a grave matter to extend the limits of an empire already inconveniently great and widely scattered; it is a still graver one to wipe a nation off the face of the earth; yet Frere must have known that both these consequences must follow upon hostilities with the Zulus, unless the country were to be given up to anarchy.[1] One should be slow—very slow—to condemn the action of the man on the spot. Judging from Sir Bartle Frere's acknowledged acumen and experience, he probably was justified in his apprehensions, and proposed to meet the danger in the right way; but the State does not want Napoleons in her Civil Service. The days or even weeks necessary for Frere to consult the Colonial Office before delivering his ultimatum could not have exposed the colonies to greater risk of Zulu raids than, by Frere's own showing, they had been running for two years previously;[2] and he took an unwarrantable step, first, in presenting the ultimatum without apprising or asking sanction from his Government; and, secondly, in directing Lord Chelmsford to begin hostilities, in spite of the instructions he had received to use every fair means to avoid them.

Our troubles in South Africa by no means came to an end with the overthrow of Cetewayo. The Boers of the Transvaal had submitted to annexation on explicit and reiterated promises of as large a measure of self-government as was enjoyed by any South African colony. Sir Bartle Frere had earnestly urged the Colonial Office to fulfil this pledge, but two years went by and no attempt was made to

[1] The Zulus as a nation have ceased to exist; their territory, upwards of 10,400 square miles in extent, has been annexed, part to the Transvaal in 1897, and part to Natal in 1903.

[2] "The die for peace or for war has been cast more than two years ago."

do so. It has been shown that annexation was effected in the mistaken belief that the majority of the Boer farmers desired it, whereas it was only the President and those whose connection with the Government enabled them to realise the financial helplessness of the Republic, that accepted annexation as the only escape from bankruptcy. It is possible—some might pronounce it probable—that the concession of a Liberal constitution immediately after the territory was admitted into the British Empire, might have reconciled the majority of the Boers to the change; it is certain that it was a grave breach of faith to neglect fulfilment of pledges so solemnly given, and for the consequences Lord Beaconsfield's Government must be held responsible. Month by month the Boers waxed more impatient: impatience deepened into anger, until the Boers themselves, by their menacing demeanour, made it impossible for the Colonial Secretary to propose an elective constitution for a people so openly disaffected. Instead of that the appointment of a Legislative Council was announced, to consist of five official and three nominated members. This fanned the smouldering fire into flame. It was a gross breach of faith, and excited a dangerous degree of sympathy with the malcontents among the Dutch population of Cape Colony and the Orange Free State. On 13th December 1879, a great meeting of Boers was held at Wonderfontein, where a declaration of independence was carried with enthusiasm, and the British Government were called upon to renounce their claim to rule the Transvaal. A "national" committee was appointed to conduct affairs, pending the reconstitution of the Volksraad.

That, in brief, was the situation when the Conservative Government in Britain was turned out of office. The Boer leaders, Kruger, Joubert and others, well informed about the course of politics in England, never doubted that the electioneering pledges of Gladstone and Hartington would be redeemed by revoking the act of annexation.[1]

[1] "If Cyprus and the Transvaal were as valuable as they are valueless, I would repudiate them because they are obtained by means dishonourable to the character of this country." (Mr. Gladstone in Midlothian.)

"It is now conclusively proved that a large majority of the Boers are bitterly against annexation. That being so, it ought not to be considered a

It has been shown that the new Cabinet did not shrink from reversing the Indian policy of their predecessors; but when, on 10th May 1880, Gladstone received a letter from Kruger and Joubert expressing a firm belief that he would carry out his professions by restoring the independence of the Transvaal Republic, and informing him that their people expected nothing less, the reply sent, after the Cabinet had deliberated on 12th May, was "that the Transvaal should receive, *and receive with promptitude, as a portion of a confederation*, the largest possible measure of local liberties that could be granted."[1]

Affairs of the Transvaal, May 1880.

In coming to this decision, so inconsistent with the policy they had proclaimed when in Opposition, Ministers were guided by the opinion strongly expressed by Frere when High Commissioner, by Sir Garnet Wolseley, who superseded him as High Commissioner, and by Sir George Colley, who succeeded Wolseley in that office on 24th April 1880.[2] If Lord Kimberley, who had succeeded to the Colonial Office, had repaired the neglect of his predecessor and given the Boers that representative Legislature which had been repeatedly promised as one of the conditions of annexation, not only would he and his colleagues have justified their acceptance of the situation created by their predecessors—*fieri non, debuit factum valet*—but agitation in the Transvaal would almost certainly have subsided. But as the months slipped away without any symptom of the pledged faith of England being redeemed, the Boers rose in revolt in December[3] and elected a provisional Government

Revolt of the Transvaal Boers, Dec. 1880.

settled question merely because annexation had taken place, and if we should find that the balance of advantage is in favour of the restoration of independence, no false sense of dignity should stand in the way." (Lord Hartington as leader of the Opposition in the House of Commons, February 1880.)

[1] The Under-Secretary for the Colonies, House of Commons, 21st May 1880.

[2] Mr. Chamberlain, speaking in Birmingham a year later (June 1881), said, "It is easy to see now that we were wrong in so deciding. I frankly admit we made a great mistake." Upon which Gladstone wrote to him: "I have read with pleasure what you say of the Transvaal. Yet I am not prepared, for myself, to concede that we made a great mistake in not advising a revocation of the annexation when we came in." (Morley's *Gladstone*, iii. 29.)

[3] The total white population of the Transvaal was estimated at this time at 40,000 to 50,000, of whom perhaps 10 per cent. were British and foreigners. The black population amounted to nearly half a million.

of three—Pretorius,[1] Kruger, and Joubert. A letter was sent to the Governor, Sir Owen Lanyon, demanding that the country should be delivered over within forty-eight hours. Before that time had elapsed, a detachment of 250 men of the 94th, marching from Lydenburg to Pretoria, were summoned to halt by a mounted Boer in the name of the Transvaal Republic. Colonel Anstruther, commanding the detachment, replied that he was marching under orders, and of course declined to halt. Without further warning a deadly fire was opened from ambush on the heights bordering the road; Anstruther fell mortally wounded: his men, scattered along the line of baggage waggons, could offer no effective resistance, the officers being picked off first. Anstruther, before he died, gave orders to surrender, but not before half his little column had fallen.[2]

The garrisons at Pretoria, Potchefstroom, Standerton and Wakkerstroom were beleaguered. They were dangerously weak—mere handfuls of men—for the army of occupation had been for some time in process of reduction. British officers who had reported contemptuously upon the military aptitude of these rough farmers, had little suspected what bitter lessons were in store for them. The Boers proved to be mounted infantry of the most formidable kind—trained rifle shots and admirably mobile on their hardy ponies, ready and able to turn the natural features of their rough country to the best advantage. If their numbers were insignificant, some 6000 or 8000 in the field, still more so was the column of 1000 with which Sir George Colley entered the Transvaal on 24th January. On the 28th he found the Boers in force strongly posted on Laing's Nek, which was in Natal, and, attacking them, was repulsed with the loss of seven officers[3] and 80 men killed and about 100 wounded. Colley fell back on his

British reverse at Laing's Nek, 28th Jan. 1881.

[1] Martinus Pretorius, son of Andries, the founder of the Dutch African Republic.

[2] Eighty-six died on the field; twenty-six afterwards died of their wounds.

[3] Among the killed was Colonel Deane of the 58th Foot. Arms of precision in the hands of good shots under cover soon taught our military authorities that the distinctive dress of officers exposed them to undue risk, for they were always picked off first. The fighting dress of men and officers has now been assimilated.

camp at Newcastle, but advanced again on 8th February, when he lost six officers and 62 men killed in an encounter beyond the Ingogo River. His whole force at the outset numbered only 1500 men, whereof he had now lost nearly 400; but on 17th February Sir Evelyn Wood arrived with reinforcements.

Meanwhile President Brand of the Orange Free State had been nobly industrious in mediation. He had induced Kruger to make overtures to Colley on 12th February, offering to suspend hostilities if the Government would send out a Royal Commission to inquire into the grievances of the Boers. Colley telegraphed home for instructions, and was directed to tell Kruger that, if his armed forces would disperse, the Commission would be appointed at once. He was told to fix *a reasonable time* for a reply. Acting upon information that Kruger was in his immediate neighbourhood, Colley wrote to him on the 21st demanding a reply *within forty-eight hours*—a soldier's notion of "reasonable time." Kruger happened to be at distant Heidelberg: it was seven days before he received what was practically an ultimatum. Colley, a good soldier experienced in Indian warfare, cared not to ascertain whether Kruger had received it or not; but on the night of the 26th occupied Majuba Hill, commanding the Boer position at Laing's Nek, with 359 men all told. Though he has been blamed for doing so, probably he was tactically right in anticipating the Boers in this movement; but believing the hill to be impregnable, he unwisely neglected to entrench his small and weary party.

Disaster of Majuba, 27th Feb. 1881.

On the morning of the 27th the Boers opened a sustained fire which seemed to those on the hill-top a mere waste of ammunition. Far deadlier than they dreamed, it covered the advance of two storming parties of one hundred rifles each, which, creeping from cover to cover without losing a man, reserved their fire till they reached the summit, and then made every bullet tell.[1] General Colley was among the first to fall; ninety of his men went down with him; the rest fell into confusion, and the position was lost.

[1] The Boers carried neither sword nor bayonet, but trusted entirely to the rifle.

Not until the day after the tragedy of Majuba did Kruger receive Colley's letter of the 21st. He replied the same day—the 28th—accepting the terms, but it was not till 7th March that his dispatch reached Sir Evelyn Wood, who had succeeded to Colley's command. Wood, knowing the critical position of the garrisons at Potchefstroom and elsewhere, agreed on that day to an armistice for eight days on President Brand's mediation. Nevertheless, he telegraphed to the Colonial Office for sanction of vigorous measures to redeem the situation: "Do not imagine I wish to fight. I know the attendant misery too well. But now you have so many troops coming, I recommend decisive, though lenient action, and I can, humanly speaking, promise victory."

These three reverses, though little more than affairs of outposts, thrilled the British public with shame and indignation. The honour of the flag must be vindicated —who should doubt it? Wherefore loud was the outcry when it became known that Wood had been overruled by the Cabinet, that he had been instructed to make peace, and that the Queen's Ministers were prepared to allow that to be wrung from them by Boer bullets which they had refused to peaceful and reiterated petition.

An agreement for peace was concluded on 22nd March, but not before a fresh humiliation had been inflicted upon the British flag by the surrender of Potchefstroom on the 21st, the little garrison, after losing 18 killed and 20 wounded, being without provisions. A Royal Commission, consisting of Sir Hercules Robinson, Sir Evelyn Wood, and Sir Henry De Villiers, began to sit on 14th June, and the upshot of their inquiry was the Convention of Pretoria, under which the Boers of the Transvaal received back their independence, subject to the suzerainty of the British Crown; a limitation which defied all the ingenuity of constitutional experts to define, and which was subsequently waived when under the Convention of London in 1884 the Transvaal reassumed its former title of South African Republic.

The Convention of Pretoria, Aug. 1881.

It had been expected of the men who had denounced annexation as a crime that they would wash their hands

of it when occasion came to them. They let the fair occasion pass, and then, as if shuddering at the first clash of arms, recoiled from what they now described as "blood-guiltiness."[1] What the Prime Minister really had to fear was a rupture in the Cabinet. It had been with much difficulty that Mr. Bright and Mr. Chamberlain had been brought to agree in refusing independence to the Boers; they would undoubtedly have resigned had their colleague determined to persevere. At least one of those colleagues perceived the damaging futility of a policy of bluff—of big words[2] without resolute force behind them. "I entirely agree with you," wrote the Colonial Secretary, Lord Kimberley, to Lord Chancellor Selborne, "that we ought to maintain a firm attitude. But there is a disposition in so many of our party to imagine that an empire can be, and ought to be, maintained without ever resorting to force, that I foresee difficulties when it comes to the real pinch."

There was only one line along which the Queen's Ministers could have moved, consistently with the dignity and stability of the Empire, in revoking the decision so emphatically announced upon their accession to office, and that line was the one recommended by Sir Hercules Robinson, whom they sent out as High Commissioner in January 1881. He advised that enough force should be employed to re-establish the Queen's authority over the Transvaal, after which the territory should be conceded to the Boer republicans. But that course was pronounced impracticable, partly because of a sympathetic agitation among the Dutch of Cape Colony and the Free State, and partly, one may be sure, because it would have cost more money at the time.

Aye, at the time—but not in the end! The book of the Transvaal was closed in 1881, but it was not clasped. Eighteen years had scarcely run their course before a

[1] "It was a question of saving the country from sheer blood-guiltiness." (Mr. Gladstone to the Liberal candidate for Cheshire; *Times*, 15th April 1881.)

[2] Sir Garnet Wolseley, after receiving telegraphic instruction from the Cabinet (9th March 1880), told the Boers that the Vaal River should flow backwards through the Drakensberg sooner than the British would be withdrawn from the Transvaal.

singular destiny laid upon the very statesman who, with John Bright, had most vehemently objected to annexation, the obligation of destroying at enormous cost of blood and treasure the Republic which he had been foremost in setting up.

CHAPTER V

Muhammad Ali—Massacre of the Mamlûks—Bombardment of Acre—Insolvency of the Egyptian Government—Institution of the Dual Control—Deposition of Khedive Ismail—The Joint Note—Arábi's revolution—Bombardment of Alexandria—Resignation of John Bright—Battle of Tel-el-Kebir—Lord Granville's circular to the Powers—Lord Dufferin's mission—Sir E. Baring (Lord Cromer) appointed Consul-General—Revolt of the Soudan—Destruction of Hicks Pasha's army—Defeat of Baker Pasha at Tokar—General Gordon sent to Khartum—Battle of El Teb—And of Tamai—The Relief Expedition—Action of Abu Klea—Fall of Khartum and death of Gordon—Motion of censure upon Ministers—Government determines to "smash the Mahdi"—Russian aggression upon Afghanistan—Decision to abandon the Soudan—Vote of credit for £11,000,000—Pacific settlement with Russia—The financial redemption of Egypt.

"EGYPT," said Napoleon emphatically in his first interview with the Governor of St. Helena—"Egypt is the most important country in the world;"[1] but Egypt is no part of the British Empire, and probably it would puzzle all but a small percentage of educated Englishmen to explain off-hand the presence in that country of a British garrison at the close of the nineteenth century. To do so requires a rapid review of the later vicissitudes and condition of a nation which had attained colossal power and consummate civilisation more than four thousand years before the Christian era.

To come to later times. It was in the year 1517 that the Ottoman Sultan, Selim I., overthrew the Mamlûk or White Slave kings of Egypt, and made their country a Turkish pashalik. This notwithstanding, it continued to be governed by four and twenty Mamlûk Beys who administered as many provinces, nominally in subjection to the Pasha appointed by the Sultan. Violence and heartless exactions were the principles of their rule, the native Egyptians maintaining a miserable existence without hope of redress.

[1] Rose's *Life of Napoleon*, i. 356.

Then came Napoleon, who secured his conquest of Egypt by the capture of Alexandria in 1798, just as Alexander the Great had done by founding that city 331 B.C., and with the same intent, namely, as a stepping-stone to an Indian Empire. Napoleon cut to pieces the Mamlûk army in the battle of the Pyramids, 13th and 21st July 1798, but after Nelson, Abercromby and Hutchinson had expelled the French from Egypt in 1801, the British Government decreed its restoration to Turkish rule.

In 1805 a new era was inaugurated by the appointment of Muhammad Ali [1] as Wali or Governor of Egypt.

Muhammad Ali, 1769–1849.

This remarkable man, the son of a Roumelian peasant, was born in 1769, the same year as Napoleon and Wellington. In the Nile campaign of 1801 he had operated with Turkish troops as an ally of the British, but he had not been long in power before he came into collision with them. Muhammad's purpose was to develop the resources of Egypt, and to restore her to her pristine grandeur as the emporium of the world. Recognising the power of the Mamlûks as a barrier to his purpose, he resolved to destroy it, whereas it was the policy of the British Government to maintain the old order of things. General Fraser, with 5000 troops, relying on the co-operation of the Mamlûks, commenced operations in March 1807 against Muhammad's troops, in the Nile valley; but the Mamlûks failed him, and British arms sustained a bloody and discreditable reverse at Rosetta, where about 1000 lives were sacrificed before the expedition was abandoned.

Muhammad then endeavoured to administer his pashalik through the Mamlûk Beys, but their selfish cruelty and lawlessness proving incapable of reform, he determined to make a clean sweep in truly Oriental fashion. The Mamlûk forces consisted of 4000 or 5000 splendid horsemen, whereof 470 of the best were invited to attend in Cairo the investiture of Muhammad's son Toussoun as Commander-in-Chief of an expedition against the Wahâbis. The glittering band having been hospitably entertained by the

Massacre of the Mamlûks, 1st March 1811.

[1] Usually written Mehemet Ali by English historians.

Wali in his Hall of Audience, took the place assigned to them in the centre of a strong column of Albanians provided to escort them out of the city. As they passed towards the gate of El Azab, they entered a narrow defile cut in the rock,[1] where, at a given signal, the escort turned upon the Mamlûks and slaughtered them to a man. The rest of them were hunted down and massacred in the country, about 2000 being sacrificed in this bloody *coup d'état*. The rest fled to the sea-coast or into the desert, and the Mamlûks were known no more as a power in Egypt. If excuse can be found for such an appalling piece of treachery, it is in the certainty that, had Muhammad not been beforehand with the Mamlûks, not only his authority, but his life, would have been forfeited.

The wretched Egyptians, ground into the dust by centuries of oppression, were thus relieved from one set of tyrants, only to undergo a yoke scarcely less intolerable. Muhammad's ambition was boundless; his schemes for regenerating Egypt were grand in scale and, in many respects, sagacious in detail; but the lot of the Fellahin or native Egyptians was lightened no whit. Muhammad's project was to enrich the country, which he considered to be his private estate; the subject peasantry he considered merely as his slaves.[2]

To his master the Sultan, so long as he recognised him as master, he performed admirable service, restoring to Turkish dominion the holy cities of Mecca and Medina, freeing the valley of the Nile from predatory Bedouins, and being prevented from subduing the Greeks only by the intervention of the Western Powers, who destroyed his

[1] The trap is no longer recognisable, the roadway having been completely altered.

[2] The Hon. Sir Charles Murray, who was British Consul-General in Egypt 1846–53, took a more favourable view of Muhammad than has been expressed above. "No Mussulman sovereign since the brilliant domination of the Arabs in Spain can be compared with him. His enlightenment surpassed that of the most famous Caliphs of Bagdad. Defective as was the police, heavy as were the public burdens, the oldest man in Egypt could not recollect a time of equal security and general prosperity. For the first time since the reign of Amasis the province was placed under a governor, strong enough to prevent others from robbing and not inclined to play the robber himself. The thanks of the traveller and the stranger are also surely due to him who has made Egypt almost as safe as Yorkshire, and far safer than some of the counties of Ireland." (*Memoir of Mohammed Ali*, London, Quaritch, 1898.)

fleet at Navarino in 1827. After that, Sultan Mahmoud II. took alarm at the ascendency of his great proconsul, and in 1831 Egypt and Turkey came to blows. In the following year Muhammad so completely defeated the Turkish army at Konieh that his next march would have seated him on the throne of the Caliphs, at which this peasant's son was undoubtedly aiming, had not the Russians moved up in force to defend the Sultan. Peace having been patched up, Muhammad was appointed in 1833 Pasha of Syria as well as of Egypt; but in 1839 he renewed his attempt, and for a third time was thwarted by the Western Powers. The combined fleets of Britain, Austria and Turkey bombarded Acre; the Egyptian army was driven out of Syria, and Muhammad ended his days as Wali or Khedive of Egypt,[1] the Sultan's firman having bestowed the pashalik upon him and his heirs in perpetuity, subject to an annual tribute of £376,000—raised in 1867 to £675,000.

Bombardment of Acre, 3rd Nov. 1840.

From the year 1841 dates the virtual separation of Egypt from the Ottoman rule. Taxes were collected and decrees issued in the Sultan's name, but the Khedive was practically an independent autocrat. Muhammad Ali died in 1849, to be succeeded in the Khedivate, first by Ibrahim, who died in the same year, next by Abbas Pasha, and then by Said Pasha in 1854, through whose pacific policy the Egyptians suffered less in taxation and war service than they had under the fiery Muhammad. But when Said in 1856 granted a concession for the construction of the Suez Canal, and the work was begun in 1859, the full weight of the corvée fell upon the wretched Fellahin, of whom 25,000 to 30,000 were kept at forced labour until the completion of the Canal in 1869.

Ismail Pasha succeeded Said in 1863. Grandson of Muhammad Ali, his rival in ambition but destitute of his genius, he launched out upon schemes of boundless extravagance, raising the public debt in thirteen years from four millions to £E.100,000,000.[2] By that time—1870—

[1] The term "Khedive" was not employed until 1867.

[2] The Egyptian pound is equal to £1, 0s. 3½d. British currency.

the Turkish governing class in Egypt having greatly diminished in number, had been compelled to admit Egyptians to the civil and military service of the country, a thing which Muhammad Ali never would allow. Ismail, jealous of his independence, would not apply to the Porte for officials to man his departments; the misery of the people bore its natural fruit in the development of a strong revolutionary or nationalist party, which was the more threatening to the Khedive's rule by reason of the preponderance of native Egyptians in the higher ranks of the army, and by the arrogant contempt shown to these by the remaining Turkish officials.

The legislature and judicature had long been utterly corrupt; the state was practically insolvent when, in 1876, the European bondholders, chiefly French and British, took alarm, and Mr. Goschen and M. Joubert were appointed to devise means to extricate the Khedive from his difficulties. The *Caisse de la Dette Publique* having been established under two comptrollers, an Englishman and a Frenchman, was altered in August 1878 to an international ministry composed of an Englishman, a Frenchman, and the Egyptian Nubar Pasha. These were swept from office in the following year by Khedive Ismail; whereupon the British and French governments interposed on behalf of the bondholders, calling upon the Sultan to depose the Khedive. The Sultan being eager for the chance of re-establishing his authority in Egypt, Ismail was banished in June 1879, Tewfik Pasha was appointed in his place, a new ministry was nominated, and the Dual Control of Finance reinstated.[1]

Insolvency of the Egyptian Government, 1876.

Deposition of Ismail Pasha, June 1879.

Such was the position when Gladstone's second ministry was formed in April 1880; the Comptrollers presented a scheme of liquidation, and the value of Egyptian land and bonds began to rise. But the schemes of reform which were then initiated did not affect the army, whereof most of the officers were Egyptian, burning with jealousy and a sense of injustice against the supercilious Turks who still

[1] The Comptrollers were Evelyn Baring (created Baron Cromer in 1892, Viscount Cromer in 1898, and Earl of Cromer in 1901) and M. de Blignières.

held high commissions. A mutiny, which broke out in January 1881 among the troops at Cairo, was suppressed, only to be repeated on a more formidable scale in September, when the Khedive saved his liberty, and probably his life, by conceding the demands of the mutineers, namely, instant dismissal of Riaz Pasha and the rest of the Ministry, convocation of the Chamber of Notables, and the redress of grievances in the army.

After this affairs took a pacific turn, but only for a few months. Disaffection spread to the civilian population; the Fellahin, still having many grievances waiting redress, threw in their lot with the army, forming therewith a nationalist Egyptian party, equally hostile to European intervention and Turkish rule. It is true that the Notables disappointed the expectation of the insubordinate colonels by supporting the new Minister, Chérif Pasha, in his refusal to increase the army to 18,000 men, which was one of the chief demands of the mutineers; but the situation appeared so grave, the Khedive's authority had been so utterly effaced, that he applied to the Porte for 10,000 Turkish troops, and preparations for embarking such a force had been made in Constantinople early in September.

But Lord Granville[1] and his colleagues disliked the idea of allowing "the unspeakable Turk" to undertake repression, which undoubtedly would have been of a sanguinary kind; and M. Gambetta, when he came into power in December, would not hear of a single Turkish general being allowed to land in Egypt, the French Government being at that time at heated issue with the Porte on the Tunisian question. Granville declared that nothing short of anarchy in Egypt would induce the Queen's Government to interfere with the Khedive's administrative independence;[2] but a fresh commercial treaty with France being in the offing, he allowed himself to be overruled by Gambetta, and on 8th January 1882 a Joint Note was presented, assuring the Khedive of the support of England and France in the event of his difficulties becoming insurmountable. What kind of support

The Joint Note, 8th Jan. 1882.

[1] Foreign Secretary since 28th April 1880.
[2] Granville to Malet, 4th November 1881.

was in Granville's mind no man may divine, unless it were the old policy of bluff which had failed so egregiously against the Boers of the Transvaal; for he explained to the French Ambassador that the Note did not commit the Queen's Government to "material action"!

Whatever the Minister meant, a few months found him hurried into action of a most material kind. The Egyptian Chamber of Notables had claimed to take the national finances out of the hands of the Comptrollers, and early in February forced the Khedive to dismiss Chérif Pasha and to appoint a nationalist cabinet, with Arábi, the head of the revolutionaries, as War Minister. At this very juncture, Gambetta's ministry fell; de Freycinet succeeding him, disclaimed all responsibility for his predecessor's acts, and, like Granville, endeavoured to construe the support promised to the Khedive in the Joint Note as meaning anything except "material action." But the imminence of anarchy in Egypt, with corresponding risk to the traffic, if not the very existence, of the Canal, forced him to change his key in May, when he proposed to Granville that Turkish forces should be summoned to restore order, acting under control of England and France, and that an Anglo-French squadron should sail to Alexandria to protect the disembarkation. Granville agreed; but there was still Bismarck to be reckoned with, and he absolutely refused his consent to Turkish intervention. Finally, at de Freycinet's instance, a conference of the Powers assembled at Constantinople on 23rd June. The Porte declined to appoint a representative, and telegraphed on the 25th to London offering exclusive administration of Egypt to Queen Victoria's Government. This Gladstone and Granville promptly declined, in Palmerstonian phrase "off their own bats," without consulting their colleagues, for which the Queen took them to task as having acted unconstitutionally. So they had, no doubt; but the majority of the Cabinet were as firm as they in determining not to be drawn into armed intervention single-handed.[1]

[1] "We have had several Cabinets more or less formal about Egypt. Bright, of course, the most peaceable: Chamberlain almost the greatest

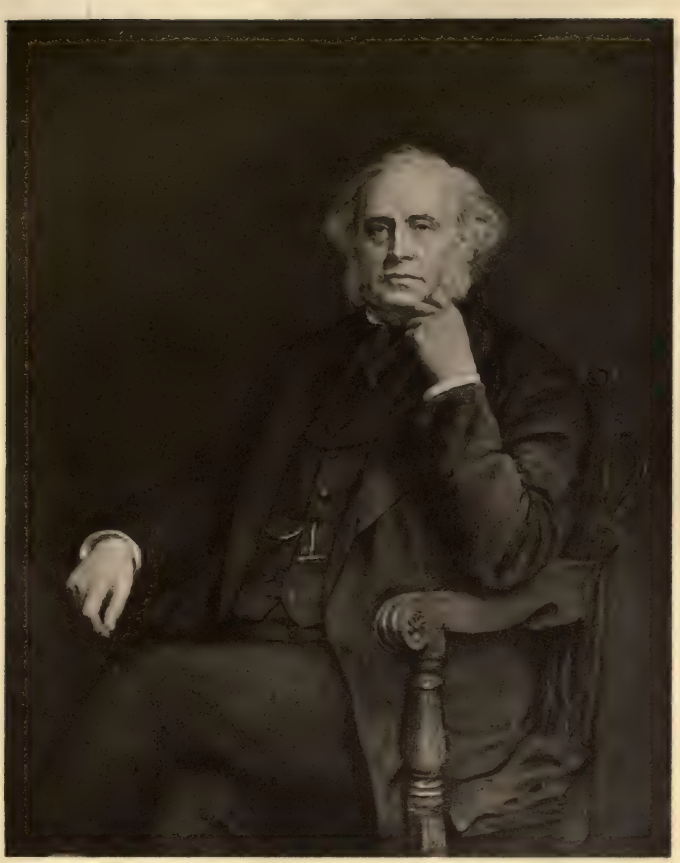
Yet this was precisely what fate had in store for them. Before the Conference could assemble, Arábi's revolution had broken out in Egypt. It began by a massacre of Europeans in Alexandria, among them some French sailors, and Mr. Cookson, the British Consul, was wounded. Arábi was busily arming the forts of Alexandria and constructing fresh batteries. As these commanded the allied squadron in the roads, the British Admiral, Sir Beauchamp Seymour, was instructed on 3rd July to secure the safety of his ships by calling upon the rebels to stop operations under threat of bombardment. Seymour was not a man for half measures; the French squadron sailed away to Port Said by order of the vacillating Freycinet, who declared he could not allow an act of war without the sanction of his Chamber, and on 11th July, after twenty-four hours' warning, Seymour opened fire upon the forts, reducing them to silence in ten hours. Arábi withdrew his troops to the interior after releasing the convicts, who set the town in a blaze, when it became a horrible scene of murder and pillage.

Arábi's revolution, 11th June 1882.

Bombardment of Alexandria, 11th July 1882.

England could not stay her hand now. "We should not be fully discharging our duty," said the Prime Minister in the House of Commons on 22nd July, "if we did not endeavour to convert the present interior state of Egypt from anarchy and conflict to peace and order. We shall look during the time that remains to us to the co-operation of the Powers of civilised Europe, if it be in any case open to us. But if every chance of obtaining co-operation is exhausted, the work will be undertaken by the single power of England." No such co-operation was to be had. France was the only power with interests in Egypt approaching those of Great Britain in magnitude; but the French Chamber rejected by 417 votes to 75 de Freycinet's demand for money to enable him to send a force for the protection of the Canal.

Jingo. . . . Gladstone does not like being in a hurry about the Suez Canal, but rather took us by surprise by proposing himself the big words in case the Turks refuse to send troops." (Lord Granville to Lord Spencer, 22nd June 1882.)



John Bright.

From the painting by W. W. Ouless, R.A.

LONDON: EDWARD ARNOLD.

Thus, by the irony of fate, was the Ministry so recently and deeply pledged to peace, retrenchment and the avoidance of foreign complications, compelled to resort to force. John Bright alone resigned, for he, at least, did not conceive that the acceptance of high office had voided the solemn assurance he had given in opposition. England went forward alone —*meglio solo che mal' accompagnato*[1]—and went forward, to the surprise of most people, with the full approval of all the Powers except France.[2] Sir Garnet Wolseley landed at Alexandria with a force of 11,000 infantry, 2000 cavalry, and 66 guns, shortly afterwards raised by reinforcements from India to a total of 31,000 of all arms, and set about the work of suppressing the rebellion with a vigour not less effective than Admiral Seymour's. Arábi had entrenched his army within four miles of earthworks at Tel-el-Kebir, where Wolseley attacked him before dawn on 13th September. The resistance offered was contemptible, Arábi showing himself equally devoid of power to inspire his troops with soldierly spirit as of knowledge to handle them in the field. The enemy was completely routed, three thousand of them laying down their arms at once. Two squadrons of the 4th Dragoon Guards and a detachment of Mounted Infantry were sent forward to Cairo, which they occupied without a blow struck. Arábi surrendered the day after his defeat, was tried by court-martial as a mutineer and condemned to death; but the sentence was commuted to banishment for life.[3]

Resignation of John Bright, 12th July 1882.

Battle of Tel-el-Kebir, 13th Sept. 1882.

Such was the irresistible chain of circumstance that

[1] "Let me congratulate you most sincerely and heartily on having so tactfully steered out of the inevitable complications of entangling alliances into the independent prosecution of a truly British national policy." (Lord Ampthill [Ambassador at Berlin] to Lord Granville, 15th July 1882.)

[2] "Hatzfeldt tells me that Bismarck becomes simply furious at the mere mention of the Egyptian question, and will scarcely even read what is sent to him on the subject. 'Let the Powers interested settle it as they please,' he writes to Hatzfeldt, 'but don't ask me *how*, for I neither know nor care.'" (Ibid.)

[3] John Bright interceded for Arábi with Gladstone, who replied: "In truth I must say that, having begun with no prejudice against Arábi, and with the strong desire that he should be saved, I am almost driven to the conclusion that he is a bad man, and that it will not be an injustice if he goes the road which thousands of his innocent countrymen through him have trodden."

dragged England into the uncoveted position of sole ruler in the Land of the Pharaohs. No blame can justly be thrown upon the Gladstone Cabinet for this result: no men could have been more sincere in their purpose of keeping clear of Mediterranean complications or have endeavoured more earnestly to act in concert with the Powers of Europe. To taunt Ministers with inconsistency because their performance was so wide of their promises would be to stoop to the baser methods of party polemics. Suddenly confronted with an unforeseen crisis of extraordinary complexity—a crisis which no human foresight could have averted—they did not flinch from the responsibility thrust upon them by the other Powers of keeping free the water-way of the nations and protecting the Egyptians from the dire alternative of limitless anarchy or ruthless tyranny. However severely one may judge subsequent phases of Gladstone's Egyptian doings, his sagacity and courage, down to the overthrow of Arábi, and somewhat beyond it, merit the whole-hearted approval of his countrymen, all the more so by reason of his intense distaste for war.

The question remained—what was Great Britain to do with Egypt now she had got it? Was it to be quietly absorbed in the Empire as Sind and Oude had been absorbed? or was it to become a permanent British protectorate under a native government? To both of these proposals, eagerly urged upon them at the time, the Cabinet, deeply pledged against territorial aggrandisement, answered emphatically, No! Pressed by the French Government on 20th September "to give at an early date some notion of what England's future intentions were with regard to Egypt," Granville strove with laudable patience to come to an understanding with M. Duclere's Cabinet as to the share to be allotted to France in controlling Egyptian finance. He proposed that the comptroller of the Public Debt should be a Frenchman; but the negotiations were embittered by the French Minister's sense of the mistake committed when France withdrew from intervention. Granville's proposal was declined, and M. Tissot, the French Ambassador through whom the negotiations had

been carried on, resigned. Finally the purpose of Her Majesty's Government was explained in Granville's Circular to the Powers of 3rd January 1883, whereof part may be quoted here as defining a policy which has never been altered or revoked during the subsequent quarter of a century.

Lord Granville's Circular to the Powers, 3rd Jan. 1883.

"Although for the present a British force remains in Egypt for the preservation of public tranquillity, Her Majesty's Government are desirous of withdrawing it as soon as the state of the country and the organisation of proper means for the maintenance of the Khedive's authority will admit of it. In the meanwhile, the position in which her Majesty's Government are placed towards his Highness imposes upon them the duty of giving advice with the object of securing that the order of things to be established shall be of a satisfactory character, and possess the elements of stability and progress."

To carry out this double purpose, Lord Dufferin,[1] British Ambassador at Constantinople, was sent to Egypt with instructions to devise and institute the said "order of things," with such speed as would admit of military evacuation at an early date. He was a man of no mean powers, a practical diplomatist with long and varied experience of affairs; but he found it impossible to reconcile these two objects. He founded, indeed, a Legislative Council and Assembly on liberal lines, but said he in his report: "Despotism not only destroys the seeds of liberty, but renders the soil on which it has trampled incapable of growing the plant. A long enslaved nation instinctively craves for the strong hand of a master rather than for a lax constitutional régime. A mild ruler is more apt to provoke contempt and insubordination than to inspire gratitude."

Lord Dufferin's Mission, Nov. 1882–Feb. 1883.

One thing stood out clearly in the report made by Lord Dufferin to Lord Granville in February 1883, namely, the urgent need for "the masterful hand of a Resident" to dry-nurse the new constitution and to regulate taxation and expenditure. In other words, there must be a temporary protectorate, involving an indefinite continuance of the military occupation.

[1] Died in 1902.

Once more the Queen's Ministers proved equal to what was forced upon them. Arábi's army having been disbanded by the Khedive on 20th December 1882, Sir Evelyn Wood was appointed Sirdar of a new Egyptian army not yet in being; General Valentine Baker took command of a new constabulary; Colonel Scott Moncrieff was brought from India to take charge of the Irrigation Department, and to Sir Benson Maxwell was committed the reform of the Tribunals. A Khedivial decree having abolished the Dual Control on 18th January 1883, Sir Auckland Colvin was appointed Financial Adviser to the Khedive and his Ministers. In all these changes British officials received cordial approval and assistance from the Khedive, Tewfik Pasha, whose personal example to his subjects, panic-stricken by a terrible visitation of cholera during the summer of 1883, did much to mitigate the difficulties of the new administration.[1]

Reluctant as they were to take any step that seemed to imply prolonged occupation, Gladstone and Granville were forced to the conclusion indicated by Lord Dufferin, that something more than a diplomatic agent was necessary at Cairo. Sir Edward Malet[2] had been British Agent and Consul-General since 1879, and had earned warm encomium from Lord Granville for his conduct of affairs throughout the succeeding trying years; but at the base of all other reforms in Egypt lay the reconstruction of her finances, and Malet's remarkable ability did not fit him specially for dealing with that augean task. He was therefore promoted to be Minister at Brussels, and by a happy inspiration, Granville's choice of a successor fell upon Sir Evelyn Baring,[3] at that time Finance Minister to the Indian Government and formerly Comptroller-General of Egyptian finance (1879–80). Readers will have fresh in mind his record of beneficent success during the four-and-twenty following years.

Sir Evelyn Baring appointed Consul-General, Aug. 1883.

With a well-disposed and enlightened Khedive like

[1] The total number of deaths from cholera registered between June and November was 58,369, but the actual mortality was estimated at 80,000 to 100,000.

[2] Died in 1908.

[3] Now Earl of Cromer.

Tewfik Pasha,[1] amenable to the guidance of such a man as Baring, the affairs of Egypt proper were now set in better train as regards the welfare of the people than, probably, they had ever been in the long history of the country. Unfortunately the nominal rule of the Khedive extended far beyond the limits of his actual authority. Between the Sahara and the Equator stretches the Soudan, a territory twice as big as France and Germany together. Here Muhammad Ali had deposed the native Sultans more than sixty years before and incorporated it with his dominion. In all this vast region the only knowledge the inhabitants had of the Government was through tax collectors —"swaggering bullies, robbing, plundering and ill-treating the people with impunity;"[2] the only stable industry was slave hunting. "The rich soil on the banks of the river," wrote Sir Samuel Baker in 1870, "which had a few years before been highly cultivated, was abandoned. . . . There was not a dog to howl for a master; oppression had driven the inhabitants from the soil." In those parts where there was still a population, they existed in the utmost misery and insecurity, a willing audience for any saviour that should appear to succour them. So when in 1881 a boat-builder's son, named Muhammad Ahmed, proclaimed himself to be that Mahdi or Deliverer whose coming had long been foretold, the Soudanese flocked to his standard and, after cutting to pieces several detached bodies of Egyptian troops, in June 1882, completely annihilated a force of 6000 men under Yussuf Pasha. Thus at the beginning of 1883 the Egyptian Government was confronted with a formidable rebellion of the whole of the Soudan. El Obeid, capital of the province of Kordofan, was captured on 16th February, and Hicks Pasha was appointed by the Khedive to command an expedition to recover it. Lord Dufferin, Sir E. Malet, Colonel Stewart, all the best advisers of the Cabinet on the spot, were strongly opposed to this expedition;[3] neverthe-

Revolt of the Soudan, 1882–83.

[1] See Lord Cromer's thoughtful estimate of Tewfik's character in *Modern Egypt*, ii. 327–33.

[2] Colonel Herbert Stewart's report on the Soudan, 1882–83.

[3] They do not appear, however, to have impressed the British Government with the urgency of need for interference. Sir E. Baring did not arrive in

less Lord Granville declined to interfere, although both Gladstone and he held a strong opinion that the Khedive's Government should confine its attention to the settlement of Egypt proper. "I look upon the possession of the Soudan as the calamity of Egypt," said Mr. Gladstone, yet he would not raise a finger to protect from that calamity the country whereof the Powers had made England sole guardian. He and Granville repeatedly disclaimed all responsibility for the appointment of General Hicks or for the operations in the Soudan; but how could Ministers believe that such a disclaimer could relieve them of responsibility for the doings of a Government over which they had a virtual protectorate, whose capital was garrisoned by the Queen's troops, whose army was commanded by an English Sirdar, and whose civil service was largely manned by British officials? Down to this point the Gladstone Cabinet must be pronounced to have acted intelligibly, sagaciously, and beneficently in circumstances of extraordinary complexity and difficulty. It is easy to see now how gravely Lord Granville erred at this juncture in not using the authority he possessed to prohibit the Khedive's Ministers from attempting the reconquest of the Soudan—gravely, I say, but not culpably, for the advices he received from Cairo appear to have put the urgency of the case imperfectly before him. He had not yet the advantage soon to be derived from "the masterful hand of a Resident." Nevertheless, sins of omission are apt, as in this case, to entail consequences as serious as sins of commission.

On 8th September Hicks Pasha[1] marched from Omdurman with 11,000 men and 6000 horses, camels and mules.

Destruction of Hicks Pasha's army, 1st–4th Nov. 1883.

On 22nd November news arrived at Cairo that the army had been completely destroyed, Hicks Pasha and all his staff having perished. They had been led by treacherous guides who were in the Mahdi's service into the heart of a dense, waterless forest about thirty miles south of El Obeid.

Egypt until three days after the expedition had started. He states (*Modern Egypt*, i. 374): "The telegram which I sent on November 19 was, so far as I am aware, the first occasion upon which the British Government were strongly pressed to express a strong opinion on the subject."

[1] Colonel Hicks (1830–83), a retired officer of the Bombay army, who had taken service in the Egyptian army.

Next, Baker Pasha was sent from Suakin to relieve Tokar, which was in imminent danger of surrendering to Osman Digna, the Mahdi's lieutenant in the Eastern Soudan. He was attacked on 4th February by hordes of spearmen; his Egyptian troops fell into panic; of his original strength of 3746, Baker brought back to Suakin only 1373. Sinkat fell on 9th February and Tokar surrendered on the 23rd.

Defeat of Baker Pasha at Tokar, 4th Feb. 1884.

By this time Sir Evelyn Baring had become established in office, and by him Lord Granville was fully apprised, probably for the first time, of the hopelessness of attempting to recover the Soudan or even to hold Khartum with Egyptian troops against the Mahdi. Sir Evelyn Wood, Colonel Baker, and Colonel Stewart, the three military authorities in Cairo, were unanimous in opinion that to succeed in that enterprise British troops must be employed. Accordingly on 13th December Lord Granville wrote—"Her Majesty's Government recommend the Ministers of the Khedive to come to an early decision to abandon all territory south of Assouan, or, at least, of Wadi Halfa. They will be prepared to assist in maintaining order in Egypt proper, and in defending it, as well as the ports of the Red Sea."

A right decision at last, albeit too late to save Hicks Pasha's ill-starred column. The Prime Minister, Cherif Pasha, resigned on 7th January 1884 rather than consent to the surrender of the Soudan; Riyaz Pasha, another Cairene Turk, but a true reformer, declined for the same reason to take office; whereupon Baring let it be known that if the Khedive could not find a Minister to carry out the evacuation, he would take the government into his own hands. Next day, 8th January, Nubar Pasha undertook to form a ministry and to arrange for withdrawing the garrisons from Khartum and other Soudanese stations.

Now it was a simple matter to dictate an order for evacuation, but it proved an exceedingly difficult one to fulfil, unless British or Indian troops were to be employed, and this her Majesty's ministers were resolved not to do. They were not responsible for the position of scattered garrisons in the Soudan, yet public opinion in England was

vehemently urgent that these should be relieved. The Egyptian Government, unable to find an officer equal to the task, applied to Lord Granville. Mr. W. T. Stead, having lately succeeded to the editorship of the *Pall Mall Gazette*,[1] insisted that there was but one man for the job—General Charles Gordon—"Chinese" Gordon, as he was called, from his success in putting down the Taeping rebellion in 1863. Mr. Stead's appeal was echoed by other journals; the public, by this time intensely excited, endorsed it; twice Granville telegraphed to Baring suggesting that Gordon should be employed, twice Baring declined the offer, believing that no British officer should be employed in the Soudan; but on being pressed a third time, he yielded,[2] and universal applause greeted Gordon's appointment on 18th January 1884.

General Gordon sent to Khartum, 18th Jan. 1884.

Gordon was just fifty years old, a gallant, experienced soldier, but of a nature intensely passionate and impulsive, fervently religious, a Cromwellian zealot, unduly subject to gusts of feeling which made him impatient of restraint, especially when it was imposed by politicians.[3] If Ministers erred in appointing him, the British public must bear the blame, for the demand that Gordon should be employed was well-nigh unanimous. Gordon left London with definite instructions to report on the military situation in the Soudan, on the measures to be taken for its evacuation, and for the safety of the Egyptian garrisons and of the Europeans in Khartum. He was further instructed to undertake such other duties for the Egyptian Government as Sir Evelyn Baring might communicate to him. These additional duties were the protection of 10,000 or 15,000 people, chiefly native Christians, and Egyptian employés

[1] Which had just been acquired in the Radical interest.

[2] "I gave a reluctant assent, in reality against my own judgment and inclination, because I thought that, as everybody differed from me, I must be wrong. I also thought that I might be unconsciously prejudiced against General Gordon from the fact that his habits of thought and modes of action in dealing with public affairs differed widely from mine. In yielding, I made a mistake which I shall never cease to regret." (Lord Cromer's *Modern Egypt*, i. 437–38.)

[3] "It is as well that Gordon should be under my orders, but a man who habitually consults the prophet Isaiah when he is in a difficulty is not apt to obey the orders of any one." (Sir E. Baring to Lord Granville, 21st Jan. 1884.)

with their families, who wished to leave the Soudan with the troops.[1] On arriving in Cairo Gordon was furnished with two firmans by the Khedive, not very consistent with each other. The first notified Gordon's appointment as Governor-General of the Soudan, and called upon the people to obey him; the other announced the restoration of independence to the representatives of the former petty Sultans of the Soudan. On 26th January General Gordon and Colonel Stewart left Cairo for the last time. On 22nd February he sent word from Khartum that it was a place in as little danger as Kensington Park. He had not been there long before the immediate purpose of his mission receded from his mind, which became concentrated upon plans for "smashing up the Mahdi." He taxed Baring's cool judgment almost to bewilderment by incessant batches of headlong telegrams proposing contradictory plans.[2] He protested against evacuation, and demanded that Indian troops should be sent him, although he had acknowledged and accepted the "irrevocable determination" of the Cabinet not to employ British troops. He asked that Zobeir Pasha should be sent to him at once, to succeed him as Governor of the Soudan. In doing so he was acting within his original instructions, which directed him to advise "upon the manner in which the safety and the good administration by the Egyptian Government of the parts on the sea-coast can best be secured." Baring

[1] It is important to remember that, at the outset, Gordon fully concurred in the expediency—the necessity—for abandoning the Soudan. On 22nd January he wrote to Granville declaring that it was, and always would be, a worthless possession, and that he considered Ministers "fully justified in recommending evacuation, inasmuch as the sacrifice necessary towards securing good government would be far too onerous to admit of such an attempt being made." When he got to Cairo he reiterated that opinion emphatically to Baring. It was only after he reached Khartum that he changed his mind.

[2] "I used to receive some twenty or thirty telegrams from General Gordon in the course of the day when he was at Khartum, those in the evening often giving opinions which it was impossible to reconcile with others despatched the same morning." (Cromer's *Modern Egypt*, i. 433.) "I rarely acted on any telegram of General Gordon's directly I received it. I generally found a batch of them waiting for me when I began my work in the morning. My practice was to put them on one side and wait till the afternoon, by which time more had generally arrived. I used then to compare the different telegrams, to try and extract from them what General Gordon really wanted, and then to decide what could be done towards carrying out his wishes." (Ibid., i. 500, *note.*)

recognised in Zobeir the only chief powerful enough to cope with the Mahdi; and he strongly recommended that the Foreign Office should sanction his employment. But Zobeir happened to be the most inveterate slave-hunter in North Africa. Granville asked Baring how his employment by the British Government could be reconciled with the discouragement and suppression of slave-hunting. Of course it could not be so reconciled; but the abandonment of the Soudan, already determined, must give a free rein to slave-hunting in that region. The Cabinet was about equally divided, some Ministers fearing the consequence of rejecting the counsel of those appointed to advise them on the spot—Baring and Gordon, others fearing what would be said if a man with Zobeir's past were invested with authority. Gladstone himself was strongly for sending Zobeir to Gordon at once,[1] but Gordon's own indiscretion put it out of Gladstone's power to carry a majority of his colleagues with him. Gordon let it be known through a telegram to the *Times* that he would resign if Zobeir was not sent to Khartum, thereby admitting the Opposition in Parliament, as well as every well or ill disposed busybody in the country, to the discussion of matter requiring calmest consideration. Decision was wrenched from the hand of Ministers. Mr. Sturge, Chairman of the Anti-Slavery Society, wrote to Granville that the employment of Zobeir "would be a degradation for England and a scandal to Europe." Two of the Cabinet who had hitherto supported Gladstone now changed their views, and on 16th March Granville telegraphed to Baring the final decision of the Cabinet not to employ Zobeir Pasha. Baring replied on the 17th: "I regret the decision at which H.M.'s Government has arrived, and I look forward with considerable apprehension to the results of the policy which it has been decided to adopt."[2]

Presage all too faithful; but let not the memory of Gladstone be held responsible. Supported by the Queen, he would have braved the obloquy of employing a slave-hunter had some of his colleagues been equally ready to

[1] Morley's *Gladstone*, iii. 159.
[2] Cromer's *Modern Egypt*, i. 526.

face the brewing storm.[1] Meanwhile tribe after tribe had been joining the Mahdi on his northward progress; the excitement in England had become intense; the Conservatives in Parliament attacked Ministers with not less than the usual recklessness of an Opposition; warlike philanthropists outside Parliament inveighed against the Government for not undertaking an anti-slavery crusade, and as early as February the Cabinet had yielded to the clamour by sending an expedition to Suakim, a port on the Red Sea.

"I am altogether opposed," telegraphed Baring, "to sending troops to Suakim except to hold the town"; but it was the fate of this Cabinet to act repeatedly against the advice of their own agents. Sir Gerald Graham was ordered on 28th February to march to the relief of Tokar. Too late again! Tokar had fallen on the 20th. It would have looked badly to retire without doing something; so Graham attacked and routed the Dervishes in their entrenchments at El Teb on 29th February. Returning to Suakim on 5th March he attacked 12,000 Dervishes at Tamai on the 14th, and routed them with great slaughter. The total British loss in killed and wounded in the two engagements was returned at 410. Graham had scored two victories without in the least affecting the strength of the Mahdi, while Gordon and Stewart were now shut up in Khartum.

Battles of El Teb, 29th Feb., and Tamai, 13th March 1884.

The correspondence after this date between Baring and the Foreign Office is painful reading. Baring implored Granville to realise that Gordon and Stewart could not now leave Khartum if they would; he reminded him that the Government had rejected the proposal to send up Zobeir Pasha, "which, if it had been acted on some weeks ago, would certainly have entirely altered the situation; and he urged that an expedition be sent as early as possible in the autumn to relieve Gordon."[2] Once again Baring's

[1] "On Saturday 15, it seemed as if by my casting vote Zobeir was to be sent to Gordon; but on Sunday —— and —— receded from their ground, and I gave way." (Gladstone's notes: Morley's *Gladstone*, iii. 159.)

[2] Baring to Granville, 26th March 1884.

advice was rejected: no British troops were to be employed for the relief of Khartum.[1]

On 7th April came Gordon's memorable telegram to Baring:—

"As far as I can understand the situation is this: you state your intention of not sending any relief up here or to Berber, and you refuse me Zobeir. I consider myself free to act according to circumstances. I shall hold out here as long as I can, and if I can suppress the rebellion I shall do so. If I cannot, I shall retire to the Equator, and leave you the indelible disgrace of abandoning the garrisons of Sennar, Kassala, Berber and Dongola, with the certainty that you will eventually be forced to smash up the Mahdi under great difficulties if you would retain peace in Egypt."

Now it was unjust to impute disgrace to the Queen's Ministers because they would not undertake the relief of garrisons which they were not responsible for having placed; but they could not absolve themselves from responsibility for the lives of their own envoys, Gordon and Stewart. Nor did they, as a Cabinet, fail to recognise that they had been brought face to face with what they had striven above all things to avoid—namely, an expedition to Khartum.[2] Baring had told them so; Wolseley had told them so, adding that time was the most important element in the case. Surely they would not be too late this time!

Professional opinions differing as to the best of several alternative routes for the expedition to take, recourse was had to a departmental committee to decide—surely the quaintest proceeding in our military history. Probably they were right in recommending an approach by the Nile; but they did not report until 29th July, and so late as 8th August Lord Hartington observed in a despatch that "the Government were still unconvinced that Gordon could not secure the withdrawal of the garrison of Khartum, but they were of opinion that the time had arrived for obtaining accurate information as to his position and, if necessary, for rendering him assistance."

Had Gordon not thrown his original instructions to the winds, he might have brought away the Khartum garrison

[1] Granville to Baring, 28th March.

[2] One Minister declared he would resign if an expedition were not sent; another would resign if it were sent. (Morley's *Gladstone*, iii. 162.)

at any time before 26th May 1884, when the Dervishes captured Berber, but he had determined to force the British Government to send an expedition to relieve the other garrisons,[1] which they were under no sort of obligation to do. By his refusal, deliberate and passionate, to subordinate his own chivalrous sympathy with the beleaguered garrisons to the duty which he had undertaken, fully assenting to its purpose,[2] he placed the Queen's Ministers in a most unfair dilemma. Was a difficult and costly expedition into the desert to be undertaken for the rescue of a disobedient servant from a situation created by his own departure from instructions? or was he to be left to his fate? Again the decision was not really in their hands. The vehemence of public opinion and the weight of parliamentary pressure combined to render inaction impossible, even had they resolved upon it. On 8th August a vote of credit was taken for £300,000, and on the 26th Sir Garnet Wolseley was appointed to command a relief expedition; but it was not until 8th October that he received his final instructions, which directed him to limit operations to what was necessary to extricate General Gordon and Colonel Stewart from Khartum.[3] The difficulties of transport and supply were out of all proportion to the fighting force, of which one division, under Sir Herbert Stewart, marched across the desert, the other, under General Earle, by the Nile.[4] It was now known that the garrison of Khartum were in the last straits of privation. Both food and ammunition were all but exhausted; and, in Colonel Colville's words, it "was a

The Relief Expedition, 1884–85.

[1] "It may be argued, why not retreat on Berber? I would rather not do that, for I would wish to show in a positive way that I had no part or lot in the abandoning of the garrisons." (Gordon's *Journal*, 5th October 1884.)

[2] "I declare positively, and once for all, that I will not leave the Soudan until every one who wants to go down is given the chance to do so . . . therefore, if any emissary or letter comes up here ordering me to come down, I will not obey it." (Ibid., 19th November.)

[3] Colonel J. D. Stewart (not to be confounded with Sir Herbert Stewart), Mr. Power and Mr. Herbin, with about forty others, were sent down the river in a steamer with despatches on 10th September. The steamer was wrecked on the 18th, and the whole party was massacred by the Bedouins at Hebbah.

[4] General Earle never succeeded in effecting the intended junction with Stewart's relieving column. He was killed in action at Kirbekan on 10th February.

campaign less against man than against time."[1] Man was overcome at the wells of Abu Klea on 17th January, where Stewart's column, about 1600 British troops and 2400 camels and horses, attacked an immensely superior number of Dervishes, who broke one face of the British square, but were repulsed after a desperate hand-to-hand conflict. The British loss in killed and wounded was 18 officers and 150 non-commissioned officers and men, including Colonel Burnaby killed, Stewart's second in command. Of the enemy 1100 dead lay round the square.

Action of Abu Klea, 17th Jan. 1885.

On the 19th Sir Herbert Stewart was mortally wounded within sight of the Nile at Metemmeh,[2] and the command devolved on Sir Charles Wilson, who succeeded in establishing himself on the river at Gubat after a sharp engagement, in which he lost nine officers and 102 men killed and wounded.

Wilson's column had now lost about 20 per cent. of its strength, but it had prevailed against Man: the other enemy, Time, still remained to be dealt with. On 21st January four steamers, sent out by Gordon, arrived at Gubat. Repairs on the steamers, and a reconnaissance towards Berber which Wilson considered necessary for the safety of his column, delayed the advance till the 24th, when Wilson embarked on two of the steamers with 26 British and 240 Egyptian troops, and began a slow and difficult ascent under continuous musketry fire from both banks—so slow and difficult that on the night of the 26th they were only three miles nearer Khartum than they had been on the previous evening. On the afternoon of the 27th a man on the river bank cried out that Khartum had fallen and Gordon was dead. Wilson would not believe it; but when, on the 28th, pressing forward through a heavy fire of artillery and small arms, they came within sight of Khartum, the Egyptian flag no longer floated over Government House. Gordon and his gallant garrison were no more.[3] Sublime in courage, ready in resource, he had maintained a heroic

Fall of Khartum and death of Gordon, 26th Jan. 1885.

[1] *History of the Soudan Campaign*, p. 61.
[2] He died of his wounds on 16th February.
[3] About 4000 are believed to have been slaughtered.

defence for more than three months, until his people, after eating all the camels, mules, dogs, rats, &c., that could be had, succumbed to famine. Relief arrived just forty-eight hours too late.

The news that Khartum had fallen moved the British public more profoundly than anything since the outbreak of the Indian Mutiny. But the emotion was of a different kind; shame feeding a hotter fire than dread, it was against their own rulers that the people's indignation blazed forth. It was in the world's theatre that the tragedy had been played to a close, every shifting scene being watched intensely by all civilised nations, sitting in judgment, untempered by mercy, upon England's honour. Say that the part borne by England was merely unheroic, none would accept the excuse that it had been forced upon her. So loud was the clamour that five-and-twenty years have hardly hushed its echoes. When Parliament met in February, Ministers were confronted with motions of censure from opposite quarters of the House of Commons; by Sir Stafford Northcote for the Conservatives and Mr. John Morley for the Radicals. The Government escaped defeat by the narrow majority of fourteen; forty Home Rulers and a dozen Liberals (Goschen and Foster among them) voting with Northcote.

Motion of censure upon Ministers, Feb. 1885.

In the lull of retrospect, after events have fallen into due perspective, it is possible to appraise dispassionately, as was not possible at the time, the measure of the Government's responsibility for the fate of Gordon, Stewart, and the garrison of Khartum. It has been indicated above that the initial error—the first step astray upon this thorny path—was the refusal of the Government to interfere with the decision of the Khedive's Ministers to hold the Soudan. Responsibility for all future disasters began with their disclaiming responsibility for Hicks Pasha's expedition. Then, having changed their plan, if not their mind, the Cabinet insisted upon the Egyptian Government abandoning the Soudan. Lord Salisbury declared that it was "impossible to conceive a more stupendous political blunder than that;"[1]

[1] House of Lords, February 1885.

nevertheless it was the right thing done at the wrong time. The second error was to override Baring's objection to employing Gordon to conduct the evacuation; the third error was when Baring's advice was set aside again, and Gordon's request for Zobeir Pasha was refused, from a pusillanimous dread of an outcry against employing a slave-hunter. Gladstone's share in this error was limited to yielding to timid colleagues in the Cabinet; but for the last and fatal error, the only one of the series which may be deemed inexcusable, he must be deemed mainly responsible. On 12th May 1884 he described the Mahdi and his cut-throats as "a people rightly struggling to be free"; and, that being his view of the situation, it is not surprising that, throughout the summer of 1884, he refused to respond to the cry for relief—refused, and then consented when it proved to be too late. The honour of England had been entrusted to him and, in the judgment of the nations, he allowed it to be smirched.

Anxiety to sift to the bottom the question of responsibility for Gordon's fate and to provide a clear, dispassionate understanding of the sources of this great calamity, has caused me to dwell, perhaps at disproportionate length, upon this dark episode in Egyptian history. The remaining events of 1885 in the Nile valley must be treated, therefore, with corresponding brevity.

Goaded to retributive action by an excited public at home, warned by Lord Wolseley at the seat of war that unless the Mahdi were "smashed," Egypt must be given up to him, advised by the cool-headed Sir Evelyn Baring that evacuation could not be safely undertaken northwards of Dongola,[1] the Government resolved upon the reconquest of the Soudan, and directed Wolseley to assume the offensive without delay. British and Indian reinforcements were landed at Suakim;[2] plant and workmen were sent out for the con-

Government determines to "smash the Mahdi," Feb. 1885.

[1] "I would earnestly impress upon her Majesty's Government that it would be neither politically wise nor dignified to carry out at once the policy of retreat from Dongola and the immediate neighbourhood." (*Modern Egypt*, ii. 29.)

[2] A notable feature of the armament was the presence of an Australian contingent, the spontaneous offering of the Colonies to the Mother Country, the first step in a scheme of imperial defence.

struction of a railway from that port to Berbera, and the nation was on the very brink of being committed to a great campaign, when external circumstances caused the Government to call a sudden halt.

Russia had taken advantage of the entanglement of Great Britain in Egyptian affairs to press forward her advance through Central Asia. By occupying Merv and Sarakhs, she had roused the reasonable apprehensions of our ally, Abdur Rahman, Amir of Afghanistan, who called upon the Indian Government to assist him in maintaining his independence.[1] Lord Dufferin, who succeeded Lord Ripon as Viceroy in December 1884, cordially accepted M. de Giers' proposal on behalf of Russia for the appointment of a joint commission representing the two Powers, for the delimitation of the proper sphere of British influence.

Russian aggression upon Afghanistan, 1884–85.

The British Commissioners, under Sir Peter Lumsden were on the ground before the end of 1884; but, upon one pretext or another, the Russian Commissioners postponed their arrival, while Russian troops continued to advance. The Joint Commission was evidently but a blind; every device was used to provoke the Amir's people at Penjdeh to a conflict; wherefore, as a precautionary measure, two Indian army corps were mobilised, and on 26th March the reserves were called out in the United Kingdom.

Still Abdur Rahman, loyal to his engagements, kept the Afghans quiet, until on the 29th General Komarow threw off the mask, attacked and captured Penjdeh.[2]

For this act of war against our ally Lord Granville called the Russian Foreign Office sharply to account. M. de Giers replied, expressing the hope that "the regrettable incident would not interrupt negotiations"; but by this time the duplicity of Russia could no longer be in doubt. "The House," said Mr. Gladstone, "will not be surprised when I say, speaking with measured words in circumstances

[1] The Amir received from the Indian Government an annual subsidy of 12 lakhs of rupees (£120,000) for the defence of his "buffer State."

[2] It was afterwards alleged by the Russian Government that this attack was unpremeditated; but how entirely it was approved at St. Petersburg was shown by the Tzar sending swords of honour to General Komarow and his Chief of the Staff.

of great gravity, that to us . . . this attack bears the appearance of an unprovoked aggression." There seemed to be no honourable means now of avoiding war with Russia. The House of Commons and the country supported ministers in the determined attitude they took up. On 21st April the Prime Minister announced his intention of asking for a vote of credit for eleven millions, and at the same time informed the House that the course of affairs on the north-west frontier of India had compelled the Government to reconsider the military position, and that the troops destined for the reconquest of the Soudan must now be held available for service elsewhere. In this manner, by an aside as it were, Parliament received the first intimation of a complete reversal of the Government's Egyptian policy. The Soudan was to be evacuated after all, and the Mahdi was to go unpunished. In ordinary circumstances such a sudden departure from declared purpose must have roused the press and the public to indignant remonstrance; but the prospect of war with Russia was so grave as to command for ministers the support of every loyal citizen. The credit supply was voted without a single dissentient voice, and criticism of Egyptian affairs was postponed until the major issue should be decided. By that time the Government had resigned in consequence of an adverse vote on the budget, and Lord Salisbury's cabinet succeeding confirmed the policy and carried out the process of evacuating the Soudan.

Decision to abandon the Soudan, April 1885.

Meanwhile the internal dissensions of the Cabinet had been kept short of rupture only by the puissant personality of Gladstone,[1] but outwardly the ministry continued to show a bold front, which, combined with the unanimity of Parliament, the resolute spirit displayed by the nation, and the ready offer of military aid by the powerful Indian princes Scindia, Holkar and the Nizam, materially modified

[1] "Between the middle of April and the middle of May, he [Gladstone] jots down with half-rueful humour the names of no fewer than nine members of the Cabinet who within that period, for one reason or another, and at one moment or another, appeared to contemplate resignation. . . . Of one meeting he said playfully to a colleague—'A very fair Cabinet to-day, only three resignations'!" (Morley's *Gladstone*, iii. 185.)

the intentions of the Tzar's ministers. A noisy wrangle over the vote of credit would certainly have encouraged them to persist in aggression. M. de Giers accepted an offer to refer the question of a breach of faith in the Penjdeh incident to the arbitration of the King of Denmark, and the nation was immediately relieved from a strain of intense anxiety.[1] On the whole it may be judged that the Russian imbroglio came as a godsend to Gladstone's ministry, enabling them to escape from their hopeless entanglement in the Soudan, which, if persisted in, would have cost far more than eleven millions.[2]

Pacific settlement of dispute with Russia, April 1885.

Lord Granville, before he left the Foreign Office, achieved for Egypt benefits far more solid than the merely negative benefit of abandoning the Soudan. The Great Powers continued coldly indifferent to Egyptian affairs, always excepting France, who still nursed bitter resentment at the presence of British arms on the Nile; but even France would not separate herself from the five other Powers who signed the Convention of London in March 1885. By this Convention an Egyptian loan of £9,434,000 was issued under the joint guarantee of all the Powers, whereby not only was bankruptcy staved off, but irrigation and other productive enterprise was rendered possible, and have been carried out under the able management of Lord Cromer, Lord Milner and their colleagues, British and Egyptian, with the following remarkable result. Direct taxation has been reduced by about £2,000,000 a year; the revenue, notwithstanding, has risen from £E.8,935,000 in 1883 to £E.15,521,775 in 1908; the public expenditure rising in the same period from £E.8,554,000 to £E.14,408,144. In 1883 the capital

The Financial Redemption of Egypt, 1885–1910.

[1] Those who were members of the Conservative Opposition in the Commons at that time will recollect the enthusiasm with which Mr. Gladstone's eloquent defiance of Russia was received, and the corresponding indignation when it was discovered afterwards that to satisfy Russian *amour propre* Sir Peter Lumsden had been recalled from Afghanistan, and the Russians had been allowed to retain the territory they had seized by "unprovoked aggression."

[2] Lord Wolseley, writing to Lord Hartington after the fall of Khartum and urging that the reconquest of the Soudan should be undertaken at once, did not conceal from him the magnitude of the undertaking, which he described as "the greatest since 1815."

of the national debt was £96,457,000, involving an annual charge of £4,268,000; in 1909 it was £95,315,780, the annual charge, including sinking fund, having been reduced to £3,595,814. The restrictions imposed in 1876 upon the Egyptian Government were removed by agreement between Great Britain and France in 1904; and although the *Caisse de la Dette* has not been abolished, its operations are confined to the payment of interest to the bondholders.

The history of the world records no operation upon a similar scale by any nation, at once so disinterested and so successful, as the redemption of Egypt by Great Britain.

CHAPTER VI

Death of Lord Beaconsfield—Sir Stafford Northcote—Charles Bradlaugh and the oath—Defeat of the Government—"The Fourth Party"—The Home Rule Movement—Charles Stewart Parnell—Parliamentary obstruction—Adoption of the closure—Institution of "boycotting"—Compensation for Disturbance Bill (Ireland)—Irish Coercion Act—Irish Land Act—Imprisonment of Parnell—Release of Parnell and other "suspects"—The Phœnix Park murders—Breach of the Kilmainham Treaty—The Dynamite Campaign—Execution of the Phœnix Park murderers—The Ground Game Act—Employers Liability Acts—Representation of the People Bill—Break-up of the Fourth Party—The Bill rejected by the Lords—The Queen's interposition—Friendly conferences upon Redistribution—The Franchise Bill passed.

To compose a narrative at once succinct and symmetrical of the course of events from 1881 to 1885, calls for dexterity of the kind required of a juggler who would keep half-a-dozen balls in the air at once—so various, so momentous, so simultaneous were the lines of action imposed upon the Government during that stormy quinquennium. In no previous period of our history is the impression so vivid of the herculean nature of the task laid upon the shoulders of a dozen men or so who undertake to govern a world-wide empire. In some respects, indeed, the central authority has derived advantage from increased rapidity of communication between the ends of the earth and greater facility of transport for troops and transmission of intelligence; but in other respects their labour have been rendered far more complex and difficult; chiefly, perhaps, by the unavoidable admission of an impatient and uninstructed public to the discussion of critical questions of policy, and by the ever-increasing temptation offered to cabinets and heads of departments to interfere with the responsibility of their agents in distant lands, especially when these agents are engaged upon military operations requiring secrecy and promptitude. A salient example of this has been discussed in the preceding chapter, where it

was shown that General Gordon was forced by a section of the Cabinet, who did not understand his character, upon reluctant British officials in Egypt, who understood it well; the Ministers so acting under pressure of popular clamour and the importunity of a powerful section of the press.

Turning back to the earlier years of Gladstone's second administration, we find the Conservative opposition dispirited, apprehensive and confused by the staggering defeat in the general election of 1880; nor had the party time for much more than to reckon up its losses before a fresh calamity descended upon it in the death of its great leader.

Death of Lord Beaconsfield, 19th April 1881.

Lord Beaconsfield, better to be known in the annals of his country as Benjamin Disraeli, died on 19th April 1881, aged seventy-six. No career more perplexing or wonder-stirring than his is to be found in the annals of Parliament. That he should have outlived the disfavour inspired by his early extravagance of manner, dress and speech, is not surprising, for the public humour, especially that essence thereof distilled into the House of Commons, is laudably generous and forgiving; but it implies a character of no common force that one so alien in blood and habit of life from the English type should not only have overcome the prejudice, then far stronger than it has since become, against men of his race, and the distrust created by what resembled deliberate pose, but should have attained such an ascendency over his party as to be recognised as the only possible counterpoise to the essentially English Gladstone. The country gentlemen, indeed, never forgot, and were slow to forgive, the jugglery of the Reform Act of 1867; they continued long to distrust him as a leader, though he compelled their confidence as a tactician—their admiration as an orator; but the seal was set to reconciliation when the 6th Duke of Northumberland joined Beaconsfield's cabinet as Lord Privy Seal in 1878. If Sir Robert Peel be reckoned the founder of modern conservatism, Disraeli must be deemed its architect.

When he quitted the House of Commons in 1876, he gave the public no time to speculate as to who was to

succeed him in the leadership of that assembly. Had he done so, probably the great preponderance of voices in the party would have declared for the War Secretary, Mr. Gathorne Hardy, who was certainly the most effective debater on the front bench, and whose fighting qualities rendered him fitter than any of his colleagues in the Commons for holding a party together. It came as a surprise, therefore, when the Chancellor of the Exchequer, Sir Stafford Northcote, quietly took the vacant seat opposite the Treasury box.

Sir Stafford Northcote, 1818–87.

> "Upon my head they placed a fruitless crown,
> And put a barren sceptre in my gripe,
> Thence to be wrench'd by an unlineal hand."

Northcote had proved an excellent Chancellor of the Exchequer; lucid in argument, sufficiently fluent in speech, mild-mannered, and as incapable of hurting the personal feelings of an opponent as of wounding a friend, he had not come short in the duties of a leader during the remaining years of that Parliament. But something more contagious than amiability—less intransitive than blamelessness—more inspiring than a mastery of sound finance—is required of him who would marshal anew the ranks of a party decimated by defeat and in dire confusion. The Parliament of 1880 was but a few weeks old when the younger blood of the Opposition began to display impatience with the passivity of the leaders on their front bench.

Among the members returned for the first time was Charles Bradlaugh, once a private in the 7th Dragoon Guards, who, after purchasing his discharge in 1853, had become publisher and proprietor of the *National Reformer*, a weekly journal of extreme revolutionary and atheistic principles, such as would not be permitted in any European State except Great Britain. Indeed, proceedings had been taken against him in 1868 for publishing blasphemous and seditious matter; but having acquired a good knowledge of common law during his connection with a solicitor's office, not only did he manage to escape conviction, but he also was instrumental in obtaining a relaxation of the "security

Charles Bradlaugh and the Parliamentary oath, 1880–85.

laws" affecting the Press. Moreover, a judge having refused in 1867 to receive evidence upon oath from Bradlaugh, on the ground that he was an atheist, the result was the Evidence Amendment Act, 1869, which empowered such persons to affirm in courts of justice. But what served chiefly to bring Bradlaugh into notoriety was the prosecution of himself and Mrs. Besant as joint publishers in 1878 of an unsavoury pamphlet entitled the *Fruits of Philosophy*, advocating artificial means of restricting the birth-rate. Here again the prosecution failed, although the sale of the pamphlet was prohibited, but, it is said, not until 180,000 copies had been disposed of.

Bradlaugh then, presenting himself at the table of the House of Commons on 3rd May, claimed to affirm instead of taking the usual oath of allegiance. The Speaker, after some hesitation, referred the question to the House: the Prime Minister and his colleagues being absent (going through the preposterous obligation, inherited from an age when the Commons were jealous of the influence of the Crown, of re-election upon accepting office), Lord Frederick Cavendish moved that the question be referred to a select committee, and Northcote, as leader of the Opposition, seconded the motion. A week later, when the committee of nineteen was to be nominated, Sir Henry Drummond Wolff moved the previous question, arguing that the House could not proceed to any business, except swearing in members, before receiving the Queen's Speech. Upon this technical objection Wolff received the support of only 74 votes; but a fire had been kindled which was to cause prolonged confusion in the ministerial ranks and excitement in the country, not to be finally extinguished until six years later.

The committee, by a bare majority of one, reported unfavourably to Bradlaugh's claim to affirm;[1] whereupon Bradlaugh again presented himself on 21st May, claiming to take the usual oath, which, as he had been at pains to inform the public through a letter in the newspapers that

[1] Select committees are appointed so as to give the Government of the day a majority of one over the Opposition. In this case the balance was upset by Mr. Hopwood, a Liberal, voting against Bradlaugh's claim. It is obvious, of course, that a committee thus appointed on party lines is most incompetent to decide nice legal points such as was submitted to this one.

morning, consisted of words which he had scores of times declared were to him sounds conveying no clear and definite meaning. Up then jumped Sir Henry Wolff, objecting to the oath being administered to one who had so clearly explained that it would have no binding effect upon his conscience.

By this time feeling was running very high in the country; moderate Liberals in the House of Commons were mildly hostile, Irish Roman Catholic members vehemently so, to the admission of an avowed and militant atheist. The Conservative leaders probably entertained private views midway between these two extremes; but they had awoke to the party advantage to be gained by taking a strong line in which they had at first declined Wolff's lead. Gladstone proposed to refer to another select Committee the question of allowing Bradlaugh to take the oath, and his amendment was carried against Wolff's motion by 289 to 214. The Committee reported that Bradlaugh could not take the oath, but might be allowed to affirm at his own risk. Accordingly, on 21st June, Mr. Labouchere, Bradlaugh's colleague in the representation of Northampton, moved that he be allowed to affirm. Sir Hardinge Giffard,[1] for the Opposition, moved that he be allowed neither to affirm nor to be sworn, and carried his amendment against the Government by a majority of 45 votes—275 to 230.

Defeat of the Government, 22nd June 1880.

It would serve no useful purpose to follow in detail the various phases of the Bradlaugh episode—the expulsion of the principal figure from the House by a posse of police—his committal to the Clock Tower on the motion of the suave Northcote—his unseating and re-election—the actions at law against him and his counter-actions, eight in all, and his final admission to take the oath in the Parliament elected in 1885 on the new Speaker (Peel) refusing to allow any objection to be moved. All these passages have passed into the region of parliamentary archæology; but their effect at the time was momentous and manifold. The prestige of the Ministry was badly damaged, not only

[1] Solicitor-General, 1875–80; Lord Chancellor, 1885–86, 1886–92, 1895–1905. Now Earl of Halsbury.

by their being frequently out-voted in the House on this ever-recurring dispute, but far more seriously in the constituencies by their association with a person avowedly hostile to every form of religion.[1] On the other hand the Conservative Opposition drew courage from repeated victories in the lobby, beginning at a time when they were suffering from grievous depression. To use a homely metaphor, the Bradlaugh question served as a gigantic red herring drawn across the trail of serious pursuit. A third result was to bring into prominence a remarkable little group of Conservatives whose collective adroitness in debate, varied individual abilities, diligent attendance in the House, and equal intrepidity in attacking the Government and rebuking their own leaders for inactivity, soon earned for them recognition as the "Fourth Party." "There are two great parties in this House," observed a certain member in the course of debate. "Three!" interjected Parnell. "Four!" cried a slim, handsome, faultlessly dressed young member from the corner of the front Opposition bench below the gangway; and amply did he and his three comrades vindicate the vaunt during the rest of that Parliament, rousing the Opposition from the lassitude of defeat, counteracting the demoralising effects of repeatedly marching through the lobbies to support the Government in their endeavours to protect life and property in Ireland, and refreshing the spirits of the party by frequent spirited onslaughts upon Ministers. Symmetry of talent in the little group made them formidable from the first. The slim young man, Lord Randolph Churchill, might have passed anywhere as a mere fashionable fop, but he belied his exterior by

The "Fourth Party," 1880–84.

[1] It is no more than justice to the memory of a very able man to record that no sooner did Bradlaugh obtain peaceable admission to the House than he won the esteem of men of all parties for his inflexible honesty, as well as respect for his business ability; whereof no sounder proof need be asked than an observation by Mr. W. H. Smith, whose profound respect for sacred things earned for him from certain irreverent young members the sobriquet of "Old Morality." "I don't believe," he said, "there is a man whose opinions I hold in greater abhorrence than Bradlaugh, but I cannot help feeling that there is not an honester man in Parliament." On 27th January 1891, on the motion of Dr. Hunter, member for North Aberdeen, the House agreed *nem. con.* to expunge from its journals the various resolutions expelling Bradlaugh from its precincts. Three days later, Bradlaugh was dead.

extraordinary aptitude for debate and resources of dauntless invective against which even the unrivalled parliamentary prestige of Mr. Gladstone proved no shield.[1] The strength of Sir Henry Wolff, *doyen* of the party (he had just turned the half-hundred), consisted in an impish humour which, distilled through long acquaintance with human nature in many lands, enabled him, smiling blandly through his spectacles, to deliver damaging thrusts with an air of maidenly simplicity. The third member of the group was Mr. John Eldon Gorst, Q.C., member for Chatham,[2] invaluable in tactics through his fifteen years' experience of Parliament, and in strategy from having been chief agent and organiser of the Conservative party under Disraeli, 1868–74. The quartette was completed by Mr. Arthur Balfour, who had been hitherto generally regarded as little more than an amiable dilettante in politics, such as was very becoming in Lord Salisbury's nephew, a dabbler in metaphysics and an understanding lover of good painting and music.

Round this exclusive group hovered several ambitious young Tories, eager for incorporation therein, but never admitted to closer union than was implied by a common enemy. The increasing hostility of the Fourth Party to the official leaders of the Opposition, the open war which Churchill declared in 1883 against the central Conservative organisation, and the popularity to which he attained as a platform speaker, unrivalled among Conservatives, are matters concerning parliamentary rather than imperial history.

It was during Gladstone's second administration that the separatist movement in Ireland attained force and

[1] A single example must here suffice, and that by no means the most forcible, of the pungency and intrepidity of Churchill's manner in debate. It is taken at random from his speech on the motion censuring the Government for delaying the relief of General Gordon (12th May 1884). "I compare the Prime Minister's efforts in the cause of General Gordon with his efforts in the cause of Mr. Bradlaugh. If a hundredth part of those invaluable moral qualities bestowed upon the cause of a seditious blasphemer had been given to the support of a Christian hero, the success of Gordon's mission would have been assured. But the finest speech the right hon. gentleman ever delivered in this House was in support of the seditious blasphemer; and the very worst he ever delivered, by common consent, was in the cause of the Christian hero."

[2] Knighted in 1885.

dimension without parallel since the fall of Daniel O'Connell and the collapse of the repeal movement in 1843.[1] Since then it had slumbered uneasily, sputtering into sanguinary activity under Stephens in 1865–67,[2] and in a more formidable raid upon Canada in 1870, which was thwarted by the vigilance of the spy Le Caron.[3] In 1871 the Irish Separatists elected Isaac Butt, member for Limerick,[4] as their leader, who devised for them the decorous title of Home Rulers; but they soon became impatient of the constitutional limits which he would have them observe, and set his authority at nought long before his death in 1879. The Home Rulers in Parliament were all at sixes and sevens when, in 1875, they received a notable recruit in the person of Charles Stewart Parnell, who had been returned at a by-election for county Meath. Scion of a well-known Protestant family settled in Ireland since the reign of Charles II., he was the great-grandson of Sir John Parnell whom Pitt removed from the Chancellorship of the Irish Exchequer in 1799 because of his opposition to the Union.[5] He had been educated at Cambridge, and had held a commission in the Wicklow Militia; but, having imbibed from his American mother a vehement hatred of English rule, he declared that his policy was one "not of conciliation, but of retaliation," and applied himself with singular resoluteness to making that rule impossible in Ireland.[6]

The Home Rule Movement, 1880.

Charles Stewart Parnell, 1846–91.

[1] See vol. ii. ch. viii. [2] Ibid., pp. 343–45.

[3] Son of a native of Colchester named Beach, this individual assumed the name of Le Caron, served in the Federal army during the American Civil War, and joined the Fenian organisation "to serve as a military spy in the interests of his native country." (*Side-lights on the Home Rule Movement*, by Sir Robert Anderson, p. 5.)

[4] A leading member of the Irish bar, Butt had defended Smith O'Brien in 1848. Originally a strong Conservative, he was one of the Protectionist minority of fifty-three against Charles Villiers's free trade resolutions in 1852

[5] It was on the motion of Sir John Parnell's eldest son, Sir Henry (afterwards Lord Congleton), that Wellington's Government sustained the defeat on the Civil List which caused its resignation.

[6] One of Parnell's most intimate associates in agitation has described him, not inaptly, as "a malcontent patrician, inspired by pride of race and the sting of difficult circumstances." (F. H. O'Donnell's *The Irish Parliamentary Party*, i. 195.)

Parnell from the first set himself to undermine Butt's authority and bring his constitutional agitation into contempt. Speaking at Manchester on 13th July 1877, he said:—"For my part I do not believe in a policy of con-

He was only nine-and-twenty when he entered Parliament his plain, slow, incisive delivery was very different from the fervid volubility which was the birthright of his Celtic colleagues. His religion might have been counted as a disability in the party of his choice, but it did not prove to be so, and his cold, disdainful presence and resolute counsel raised him before long to the position of recognised leader. The elections of 1880 had increased the number of Home Rule members from fifty-one to sixty—a phalanx which only awaited authority and discipline to make it formidable. These requisites the Irish Roman Catholic members recognised and accepted at the hands of the Protestant Parnell. Already in the former Parliament he had adopted and reduced to system the device of parliamentary obstruction, with the avowed purpose of arresting every kind of legislation until the demands of his party should be granted. Rules of debate, originally framed to ensure adequate discussion of every measure, now proved utterly ineffective against men who, being devoid of respect for parliamentary tradition, banded themselves together to make discussion interminable. In July 1877 Northcote had moved and carried a new rule regulating procedure with greater stringency than heretofore; but neither this nor subsequent additions and amendments to the standing orders availed anything against remorseless obstruction. Mr. Gladstone was compelled in 1882 to ask the House of Commons to regain control of its own proceedings by adopting the closure. That he took this course with the utmost reluctance we may well believe, for none cherished more reverently than he the honourable traditions of Parliament.

Parliamentary obstruction, 1877–84.

Adoption of the closure, March 1882.

"We see," said he, "the House exhausted with its labours, failing in the performance of them, beginning to lose the esteem of the country, lapsing by degrees into a slavery of its own system. This House has conquered its external foes, and now it runs the risk of being vanquished by those who, perhaps, are not the noblest of its own children."

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ciliating English feeling or English prejudices. . . . Why was the English Church in Ireland disestablished and disendowed? Because there was an explosion at Clerkenwell and there was a lock shot off a prison van in Manchester."

The Conservatives, acting, let us say frankly, on no loftier principle than Tierney's,[1] aligned themselves with the Home Rulers in vigorous resistance to the new rules, and were taunted by John Bright with simulating alarm at the innovation. Time has not forgone its revenge; three or four years later a Conservative ministry did not scruple to use and to remodel the instrument which they had denounced as fatal to liberty of speech, and calculated to reduce Mr. Speaker to the position of "a minion of the ministry of the day."[2]

Neither the closure nor any of the subsidiary amendments to the rules of debate availed to do more than mitigate the evil of parliamentary obstruction, for the closure could not be applied until it appeared to the Speaker that "the evident sense of the House" betrayed its weariness of discussion. Moreover the Irish party, under the adroit despotism of Parnell, constantly discovered fresh means of applying rules to the delay, instead of the promotion, of business. But Parnell's authority extended far beyond the walls of the House of Commons. In October 1879, the National Land League of Ireland was inaugurated at a convention in Dublin, based upon principles and aimed at results best described in the words of its founder, Michael Davitt, who had been released on ticket-of-leave from penal servitude, to which he was sentenced in 1870 as "arms agent" of the Fenians. The object of the Land League, he said, was "the complete destruction of Irish landlordism, first, as the system which was responsible for the poverty and periodical famines which have decimated Ireland; and secondly, because landlordism was a British garrison which barred the way to national independence." Parnell

[1] "The duty of an Opposition is to oppose everything, to propose nothing, and to turn out the Government."

[2] It cannot be denied that part, at least, of the evil predicted has come to pass, not as affecting the Speaker's dignity and authority, but as increasing the power of the ministry at the expense of the House in general. The loquacity of private members being tenfold what it was fifty or sixty years ago, so much time is spent on the earlier clauses of any important Bill, that the closure has to be resorted to in order to get it through at all. Especially does the "guillotine" or amended form of "closure by compartments" enable a Minister to obtain the greater part of a measure without any discussion whatever. But in justice to British statesmanship it must be acknowledged that these additional powers were forced upon Ministers by circumstances beyond their own control.

having been elected president of the League, went off to America to collect funds. His advocacy of constitutional agitation offended the I.R.B.,[1] which was the "physical force" wing of the Fenian brotherhood; but he regained the favour of that body on his return by describing to a meeting in the Rotunda at Dublin how a gentleman had handed him thirty dollars on a platform in America with the remark—"Here's five dollars for bread, and five-and-twenty for lead!" Down to this point Parnell's advice to the Irish farmers had been to offer what they considered a fair rent for their holdings, and if the landlords refused it, then they were to pay no rent at all.[2] But as time went on and his influence increased, Parnell ceased to offer advice from the platform: he issued edicts which were obeyed with the dutiful fervour paid to Papal decrees. And whereas all edicts to be effective must carry corresponding penalties against the disobedient, he prescribed a system of intimidation to be enforced against transgressors, as heartless and fruitful of misery as was ever devised for the persecution of heretics.

Institution of "boycotting," 19th Sept. 1880.

"What is to be done," asked Parnell in the course of a speech at Ennis on 19th September 1880, "with a tenant bidding for a farm from which another tenant has been evicted?"—"Shoot him!" cried somebody in the audience. "No," replied Parnell, "I do not say shoot him; there is a more Christian and charitable way of dealing with him. When a man takes a farm from which another has been evicted, you must shun him on the roadside when you meet him, you must shun him in the streets of the town, you must shun him at the shop-counter, you must shun him in the fair and in the market-place, and even in the house of worship. By leaving him severely alone, by putting him into a moral Coventry, by isolating him from the rest of his kind as if he were a leper of old, you must show him your detestation of the crime he has committed; and you may depend upon it, if the population of Ireland carry out this doctrine, that there will be no man so full of avarice, so lost to shame, as to dare the public opinion of all right-thinking men within the country and to transgress your unwritten code of laws."

The scheme thus heartlessly enunciated was mercilessly put in force by every branch of the Land League, not only

[1] Irish Republican Brotherhood. [2] At Navan 11th October 1879.

against "land-grabbers," but against landlords, land-agents, shopkeepers who presumed to sell goods to persons under the ban, and against all, high and low, who dared to withstand the new tyranny. It received, and has retained, the title of "boycotting," because one of its earliest victims was Captain Boycott, Lord Erne's agent at Lough Mark. So stupendous was the power of this new form of terrorism that the law of the land ceased to be any terror to evil-doers. The murder of Lord Mountmorres on 25th September was one of the earliest incidents in the ensuing anarchy. Men were slaughtered, sometimes in the presence of their wives and children, cattle and horses brutally maimed, and with almost certain impunity, for no witness would give evidence, no juryman give a true verdict, with the fear of boycotting before him or the prospect of a visit from "Captain Moonlight."

> "The difference 'twixt 'Moonlight' and moonshine,
> The people now well understand:
> The first is the law of the Land League,
> The other—the law of the land."

The defencelessness of the loyal minority in Ireland was aggravated by the action of the Government in allowing the Act to lapse which conferred extraordinary powers on the executive. Gladstone would try conciliation instead in the shape of a bill for the compensation of evicted tenants. In the debates on this bill it was shown that Gladstone, when he spoke of 15,000 people being rendered houseless and homeless by the action of their landlords, had confounded notices of ejection with actual evictions. Lord George Hamilton cited the case of county Donegal, where 156 such notices had been served during the first six months of the year, but only eighteen evictions had followed. In Tyrone a certain agent had taken out forty ejectment notices, without a single eviction taking place. Ejectment notices being the only resource of a landlord against tenants who were obeying Parnell's command to withhold the rent, many Liberals declined to support a proposal to indemnify them for breaking their contracts. Lord Lansdowne, Under-Secretary for

Compensation for Disturbance Bill, June 1880.

India,[1] and Mr. Arthur Peel, Under Home Secretary,[2] resigned office; the Duke of Argyll, Lord Privy Seal, only deferred his resignation till the following year; twenty Liberal members voted against the second reading, about fifty abstaining from voting. The bill had not even the recommendation of satisfying the Irish members, Parnell and his followers opposing it persistently in committee and declining to vote for the third reading. In these circumstances it surprised nobody it consoled the Whigs both within and without the Cabinet, when the measure was thrown out by the Lords, a majority of the Ministerialist party in that House voting against it. But Radicals and Home Rulers were greatly exasperated, and their historians have laid the responsibility for the subsequent anarchy in Ireland at the door of the Peers.[3]

The Home Rule members then transferred their operations to Ireland, in nearly all parts of which, except Ulster, they succeeded, through the thinly veiled agency of the Land League, in creating such a condition of lawlessness and sanguinary crime, that on 2nd November proceedings were instituted in the Dublin courts against Parnell and five other members of Parliament for seditious conspiracy. The jury, as usual, dared not convict and disagreed; but before that happened, Gladstone had been forced to consent to an early meeting of Parliament, in order to obtain extraordinary powers for dealing with crime in Ireland, far exceeding in stringency those which the Beaconsfield Government had left ready for their successors, but which had been discarded in deference to the Radicals. All through the autumn of 1880 the Lord-Lieutenant, Earl Cowper, had been pressing for such powers. "For the ordinary law," he wrote, "to be sufficient to repress crime, it is necessary that the majority of the population be on the side of the injured person, and in the disturbed parts of Ireland the vast majority are, in cases of an agrarian

[1] Governor-General of Canada 1883–88; Viceroy of India 1888–94.

[2] Speaker of House of Commons 1884–95; created Viscount Peel 1895.

[3] Gladstone attributed the disorders in Ireland to this action of the Lords, which he described as "a wild excess of landlordism." (Morley's *Gladstone*, iii. 49.)

nature, invariably on the side of the criminal." On 23rd November he informed his chief that he must resign unless *Habeas Corpus* were suspended and an Arms Act passed. Cowper was a Whig, a phase of political being which Gladstone had now left far behind; but the Chief Secretary, W. E. Forster, although a thorough-going Radical, was as urgent as Cowper for measures of repression; wherefore Parliament was summoned to meet on 6th January 1881. Gladstone found "to his dismay" that not only Forster, but Bright and Chamberlain, insisted upon suspension of *Habeas Corpus*,[1] and the Protection of Person and Property Bill was introduced at once. Only eight Liberal members ranged themselves with Parnell in his resistance to the suspension of constitutional rights involved in the measure; the Conservative Opposition supported the Government, but it was not until Mr. Speaker Brand, at the end of a sitting of forty-one hours, declared that he would not call upon any other member, but would put the question at once, that the bill obtained a first reading, amid loud cries of "Privilege!" from the Irish benches. The Speaker's action was, strictly speaking, unconstitutional; there was no parliamentary precedent for it, and it was theoretically inconsistent with freedom of debate; but that freedom had been destroyed already by the action of a small minority, and the overwhelming weight of opinion both in and out of Parliament enthusiastically endorsed what had been done.

Irish Coercion Act, 1881.

The Act suspending *Habeas Corpus* until the end of September 1882 became law on 2nd March; the Arms Act followed on the 21st. Both of these measures had been committed to the conduct of Chief Secretary Forster, who had asked for them. Conciliation was to follow from the hands of the Prime Minister himself, who introduced a Land Bill embodying the demands of the Land League—fixity of tenure, fair rent, and free sale, familiarly known as "the three F's." In other words, the rent of every holding was to be fixed

Irish Land Law Bill, 1881.

[1] Morley's *Gladstone*, iii. 50. The strange excuse which Gladstone gives for having yielded in this matter will be found at this reference.

by Commissioners appointed for the purpose; no tenant could be disturbed in his holding so long as he paid the rent so fixed, and every tenant was to have the right to sell his tenancy without reference to the owner of the soil. So startling an invasion of the recognised rights of landowners naturally drew remonstrance from thoughtful persons outside the murky atmosphere of party politics. Gladstone tossed that remonstrance contemptuously aside by a memorable and infelicitous allusion to the absurdity of applying "the principles of political economy to the people and circumstances of Ireland exactly as if he had been proposing to legislate for the inhabitants of Jupiter and Saturn." He got his bill through, for the Lords shrank from following Lord Salisbury's advice to reject it. The victory cost the Prime Minister the loss of an important colleague, the Duke of Argyll. That he might have borne with equanimity, so far had Gladstone strayed from the course upon which he and the "Radical Duke" had entered together as colleagues in 1853; but it was indeed ill to bear the reception which the Irish people gave to this costly olive branch. Parnell could not afford to let the Land Act prove a success, for if Ireland settled down to content, American dollars would cease to flow into the coffers of the Land League. He therefore forbade the tenantry to go before the Land Court, until a few test cases, carefully chosen as those of low rented farms, should be decided.

Disorder in Ireland was indeed approaching a climax. In proportion as local branches of the Land League were multiplied, so did agrarian crimes increase. In 1878 there had been only 301 reported; the number rose to 863 in 1879, to 2590 in 1880, and to 4439 in 1881; and not a word of disapproval was spoken by Parnell or his colleagues. Gladstone ill brooked that his grand act of conciliation should be rendered null by the action of a single individual: on 13th October he announced at the Guildhall that Parnell had been arrested. A fortnight later, before an audience at Liverpool, he justified that act in words which bear to be remembered in connection with the relation

Imprisonment of Parnell, 13th Oct. 1881.

in which he was to stand with the Irish leaders four years later.

"The immediate object which is proposed is rapine—I don't call it by any other name. . . . It is a great issue; it is a conflict for the very first and elementary principles upon which civil society is constituted. It is idle to talk of either law or order, or liberty or religion or civilisation, if these gentlemen are to carry through the reckless and chaotic schemes that they have devised. Rapine is their first, but rapine is not their only object. It is perfectly true that these gentlemen wish to march through rapine to the disintegration and dismemberment of the empire, and, I am sorry to say, even to the placing of different parts of the empire in direct hostility one with another. That is the issue in which we are engaged."[1]

About the same time as Parnell went to Kilmainham gaol, three other members of Parliament and some officials of the Land League were imprisoned. Parnell retaliated by issuing a manifesto calling upon the tenants to pay no rent until he and his colleagues were released; whereupon the Government proclaimed the Land League as a criminal association. On 3rd January 1882 the Corporation of Dublin, by 29 votes to 23, resolved to confer the freedom of the city on Parnell and his fellow-prisoner, Mr. Dillon, M.P. This and other manifestations, coupled with the apparent failure of vigorous measures to restore order, caused the Cabinet to waver in the course upon which it had entered. Mr. Chamberlain was persuaded by Captain O'Shea, M.P., that Parnell desired his liberty in order to use his great influence in restoring peace. The Government stooped to the lure; they entered into negotiations with Parnell, and upon receiving his explicit assurance that "the exertions which he and his colleagues would be able to make strenuously and unremittingly would be effective in stopping outrages and intimidation of all kinds,"[2] the order for release was given on 2nd May. Lord Cowper and Mr. Forster immediately

Release of Parnell and the other suspects, 2nd May 1882.

[1] Lord Morley has not found room for this eloquent and memorable passage in the 1800 pages of his *Life of Gladstone*.

[2] Another clause in this compact, known as "the Kilmainham treaty," was not made public at the time. It was an undertaking by Parnell "to co-operate cordially for the future with the Liberal party in forwarding Liberal principles."

CHARLES STEWART PARNELL.

Reproduced from the 'Vanity Fair' cartoon, by kind permission.

resigned; Lord Spencer and Lord Frederick Cavendish[1] succeeding respectively to the offices of Lord-Lieutenant and Chief Secretary. Such was the prologue to a tragedy which was to bring home to every Englishman the nature of the horror that had desolated many a home, patrician as well as plebeian, in Ireland.

The new Lord-Lieutenant arrived in Dublin with the Chief Secretary on the morning of 6th May. After spending some hours in the Castle upon business, Lord Spencer rode out through the Phœnix Park about five o'clock. An hour or two later, Lord Frederick and Mr. Burke, the permanent Under-Secretary, were walking through the Park towards the Chief Secretary's Lodge. It was a fine spring evening, and many people were about. As the pair passed the opening on the right which gives a view of the Viceregal Lodge, two fellows met them on the path. One of them, Brady, a man of great size and strength, stooped as if to tie his shoe-lace, then, springing erect, he gripped Mr. Burke by the waist and stabbed him in the back, the other ruffian, Kelly, slashing him across the throat as he fell. Lord Frederick, trying to defend his friend with an umbrella, received his death-wound in the breast from Brady's knife.[2]

Phœnix Park murders, 6th May 1882.

In recording this tragedy Lord Morley remarks that "while the Irish leaders were locked up, a secret murder club had taken matters in hand in their own way."[3] But, it may be asked, had there been no murders before the imprisonment of Parnell and his colleagues? Had they ever by word or deed done anything to discourage outrages? It is idle to hold those men guiltless who had devised and organised the terrible form of intimidation and terrorism known as boycotting. The eminence of the victims in the Phœnix Park aroused profound sensation far beyond the limits of Ireland; but that butchery was not one whit more ferocious than many others committed upon humbler

[1] Younger brother of the Marquess of Hartington; he married a niece of Mrs. Gladstone.

[2] Lord Frederick's fate was accidental. He was not known to the assassins, and received the knife which had been ground for his predecessor Forster and for Burke.

[3] Morley's *Gladstone*, iii. 67.

sufferers. For example, when the bodies of Lord Ardilaun's two bailiffs were found, brutally battered, in sacks in Lough Mask about three months before the tragedy in Phœnix Park, their assassins, fearing that a family named Joyce knew of their guilt and might inform upon them, determined to silence them once for all. Joyce lived in a lonely house at Maamtrasna with his mother, wife, daughter, and two sons. On the night of 17th August, a gang of eight ruffians forced their way into the house and put five of the inmates to death; the sixth, one of the sons, alone escaped badly wounded.

Ireland had been brought to a desperate pass. The people had been taught from the Prime Minister's own lips that violent crime was the surest means to produce "that attitude of attention and preparedness on the part of the whole population of this country which qualifies them to embrace, in a manner foreign to their habits at other times, the vast importance of the Irish controversy."[1] Vain was the garrison of 20,000 troops and 20,000 constabulary to restrain the peasantry when such rich rewards were promised to disorder. The murder of their Chief Secretary, indeed, caused the first act of the Government to be a fresh coercion measure of extreme severity, creating special tribunals for the trial of suspects and criminals, arming the police with arbitrary powers of search and enacting drastic penalties for incitement to crime. But this Act was closely followed by another dealing with Arrears of Rent exactly as demanded by the Land League, whereby about two millions sterling were applied to release Irish tenants from liabilities which the Land League had forbidden them to fulfil, the balance of arrears being wiped out at the expense of creditor landlords.

No doubt Parnell was shocked and disconcerted at first by the fate of the Chief Secretary. He wrote to the Prime Minister offering to resign his seat in Parliament; he issued a manifesto expressing disapproval of "this cowardly and unprovoked assassination," and was promptly called to account by the Clan-na-Gael for so doing. Without the

[1] House of Commons, 31st May 1869.

clan, Parnell was powerless; indeed, he had to apply for police protection in London in consequence of their threats. The clan must be kept in good-humour; what private communications passed between its officials and the President of the Land League[1] have never been revealed; but Parnell regained their favour and support by throwing the Kilmainham treaty to the winds, and obstructing with all his might the new Coercion Bill introduced by the Home Secretary, Sir William Harcourt. As for the exertions which he had deluded Gladstone into believing he would make "strenuously and unremittingly," if he made any attempt to fulfil that undertaking it was singularly ineffective.[2] Crime followed the National League as closely as Gladstone had declared it "dogged the footsteps of the Land League." On 8th June Mr. Walter Bourke of Rahassan, co. Galway, and Corporal Wallace, acting as his escort, were shot dead in open day from an ambush near Gort; on the 29th Lord Clanricarde's agent, Mr. Blake, and his steward, Mr. Keene, were murdered in a similar way; on 17th August a farmer near Kilkenny was dragged out of bed and shot. Nor was terrorism confined to Ireland. Public men of both parties were in frequent receipt of threatening letters; Ministers, however unwillingly, had to submit to escort by plain-clothes detectives; and in January 1883 a new device for concussing the Government into granting Irish demands was adopted at the instance of Patrick Ford of the *Irish World* newspaper. He prescribed that the war should be carried into England by wrecking public buildings by dynamite. As usual, the authorities received warning from informers, and proper precautions averted what might otherwise have been a wide-spread calamity; but on 20th January the conspirators managed to bring off an

Breach of the "Kilmainham treaty," 1882.

The Dynamite Campaign, 1882–85.

[1] The Land League, pronounced illegal by the edict of 18th October 1881, was reconstituted as the National League a year later, under the same officials and with practically the same constitution and objects as before.

[2] Mr. Forster was bold enough to charge Parnell to his face with complicity in outrage. "It is not," he said in the House of Commons on 22nd Feb. 1883, "that he himself directly planned or perpetrated outrages or murders, but that he either connived at them or, warned by facts and statements, he determined to remain in ignorance."

explosion in Glasgow. On the night of 15th March the west end of London resounded to a loud report caused by the explosion of a quantity of nitro-glycerine which had wrecked a room in the Local Government Board and shattered hundreds of windows in the neighbourhood. On the same evening a case of the same material was discovered at the *Times* printing office in time to avert the explosion. In December 1884 an Irish American, named Mackay Lomasney, was blown to pieces in attempting to destroy London Bridge; but the most serious attempt of all was delayed till the afternoon of 24th January 1885, when three explosions took place simultaneously, one in Westminster Hall, which blew an enormous hole in the pavement, another in the roof, and smashed all the windows; another in the House of Commons itself (not sitting at the time), which tore down some of the galleries and injured two constables; and a third in the Tower of London, whereby the armoury was set on fire and five children were wounded. For these and other attempts, frustrated by the vigilance of the police, thirty-two miscreants were sentenced to long periods of penal servitude; but Parnell, addressing a meeting in Clare only two days after the explosions in London, spoke not a syllable in condemnation of these outrages, though he violently denounced landlords, land-agents and "land-grabbers." The melancholy—the humiliating part of the story is that these sinister proceedings prevailed to convert the Prime Minister to the views of the Home Rulers; but of that presently.

Execution of the Phœnix Park murderers, 1883.

The powers conferred on the police by the Crimes Act of 1882 enabled them to bring to justice the gang who had planned and carried out the Phœnix Park murders. In January 1883 seventeen persons were arrested in Dublin, one of whom, named Farrell, turned informer and revealed the nature and objects of the secret society of "Invincibles," formed primarily to make away with Forster while he was Chief Secretary, and frustrated in that purpose only by a series of the narrowest chances. Another of those arrested was James Carey, who had given the signal for the murder of Burke by raising a white handkerchief. He turned Queen's

evidence, and was released after the trial; five of the assassins were hanged, the rest being sentenced to various terms of imprisonment. But the reckoning was not yet complete. Carey was dogged by an emissary of the Invincibles, one O'Donnell, who sailed in the same ship with him to Cape Town and there murdered him. The capture of O'Donnell, his trial and execution in England brought this bloody chapter to a close.

Even those who condemn most unsparingly Gladstone's Irish policy, cannot refuse to acknowledge that much useful legislation was accomplished during his second administration. None but a strong Cabinet could have effected so much, beset as it was with extraordinary difficulties in Egypt, in Afghanistan, and in Ireland. Space can only be found here for summary rehearsal of the more important.

Sir William Harcourt's Ground Game Act of 1880 has laid to rest, perhaps finally, a bitter controversy, by conferring on agricultural tenants a joint, inalienable right to the hares and rabbits upon their farms. It was opposed by the Conservatives, who sought to preserve the sacred right of free contract by leaving the tenant free to bargain with his landlord for a transfer of his right; but many of them felt in their hearts that a less stringent reform than was proposed would not meet those cases, not few in number, in which the preservation of these destructive rodents had been carried to excess. The prediction, freely made, that winged game would disappear with the ground game has proved singularly inaccurate; and a wholly unexpected effect of the law has come to pass in the utter collapse of the agitation against the game-laws, which had been carried on with great heat through more than one generation.

The Ground Game Act, 1880.

In the same year a vital and far-reaching change was effected in the relations of masters and workmen by Mr. Dodson's Employers Liability Act. The Court of Exchequer in 1837 had decided that an employer was liable to members of the public for the result of negligence in his workmen, but was only liable to those in his employ for the result of negligence on his own part. Such was the doctrine of

Employers Liability Acts, 1880–96.

"common employment," which Mr. Dodson's Act modified to the extent of making the employer liable to his work-people for negligence on the part of superintendents or foremen "to whose orders the workmen were bound to conform." The principle of "common employment" was finally extinguished altogether by the Unionist Government in 1896, when Mr. Chamberlain sorely tried the allegiance of many of his party by an amending Act imposing upon employers liability to their workmen for injuries resulting from the act of any person employed by them in any capacity whatever.[1]

Mr. Chamberlain's Bankruptcy Act (1883) effected a salutary reform by transferring the control of insolvent estates from the Court of Bankruptcy to official receivers appointed by the Board of Trade. In the Corrupt Practices Act (1883) the Attorney-General, Sir Henry James,[2] dealt a blow well-nigh fatal to direct bribery and treating at elections, and earned the gratitude of every subsequent aspirant to parliamentary honours by fixing under stringent penalties the expenses of every candidate at a maximum proportioned to the number of the electorate. The Conservative Opposition allowed both this measure and the Agricultural Holdings Bill to pass second reading without a division. By the last-named measure recognition was given for the first time to the justice of holding a landlord bound to compensate an outgoing tenant for certain kinds of improvement and for the unexhausted value of manures left in the soil.

The measure which caused greater searching of Conservative hearts than any other during this administration

[1] This Act threatened to cost Lord Salisbury's Government the defection of many supporters. Mine-owners, especially, apprehended that the cost of coal would be increased by from 2d. to 8d. a ton. But, although indubitably an additional burden was thrown upon production by this and subsequent Acts, it has been lightened by a general system of insurance. Official returns show that in the year 1909 the total compensation paid for accidents in coal-mines (wherein accidents were nearly six times more numerous than in factories) amounted to no more than four-fifths of a penny per ton of coal raised. To some extent the liability of employers has tended to increase malingering; but, on the whole, the advantage secured to the working classes has been immense in proportion to the burden upon employers; the total amount paid in respect to injuries and fatal accidents in 1909 being about three millions sterling.

[2] Created Lord James of Hereford, 1895.

was the Reform Bill, introduced by the Prime Minister on 28th February 1884, for the enfranchisement of the working classes in counties. Not as in the days before the great Reform Act of 1832 was the country agitated by tumultuous impatience for the measure; only so far was it stirred as might be done from the platforms of Liberal members and candidates, who were persuaded that the deeper was the plunge into the lower strata of society the greater would be the volume of support secured for their own party. Yet, regarded merely as an extension of the electorate, Mr. Gladstone's Bill threw the Acts of 1832 and 1867 into the shade. While the Reform Act of 1832 had added less than 500,000 voters to the roll, that of 1867 not much more than a million, this measure would increase the total electorate from three millions to five millions. Could the oracular *la Reine le veult* ever be achieved for such a gigantic transference of power at the instance of a ministry harassed and discredited as Gladstone's ministry had been? It is improbable that even Gladstone's genius would have been equal to the task had the Conservatives been able to present a solid front in opposition. By-elections had been going against the Government with unusual persistency the hour was at hand when even the *Times*, in those days most prescient of weather-cocks, towering above all other indices of public feeling,[1] would desert them; one wing of the Cabinet was known to be of Lord Melbourne's mood—"Why can't ye leave it alone?" Nay, Gladstone himself was "not naturally any more ardent for a change in the political machinery than Burke or Canning had been";[2] but he stood in dire need of a dominant issue whereon to rehabilitate his ministry from the humiliation of two fresh

Representation of the People Bill, 1884.

[1] "Much is forgiven to men who have a reputation; but in face of continual and glaring proofs of failure to conduct the most ordinary affairs, the country may speedily be driven to the conclusion that there would at least be no harm in trying what can be done by persons with less high-sounding names. Once before there was a 'Ministry of All the Talents,' which conspicuously failed to carry on the national business; and whatever the powers of the men who now compose the government, they are collectively cursed with an infirmity of will and a blindness to facts which are rapidly involving the country in difficulties and dangers such as the most powerful State may shrink from encountering."

[2] Morley's *Gladstone*, iii. 125.

defeats upon the perpetual Bradlaugh dispute (11th and 26th February), and an escape by only seventeen votes from defeat on a motion of censure upon Egyptian affairs (19th February).

His strategy succeeded. It rallied the ministerial ranks; it detached sixty Parnellites from the Opposition; and the Conservatives, seamed with intestinal feud by the Fourth Party, offered to the Representation of the People Bill only a half-hearted resistance, founded upon disapproval genuine enough in most of them, but rendered flaccid through dread of alienating the new electors whom they were not strong enough to prevent being called into being. Conservative principle in regard to franchise extension had been thrown overboard by Disraeli. If it was right to give votes to householders in towns in 1867, how could it be wrong to confer the like upon householders in counties in 1884? The question had come to be one merely of expediency. This huge expansion of the electorate could not be contemplated apart from rearrangement of constituencies; and rearrangement was promised by the Government; but what security was there against the constituencies being "gerry-mandered" (to use an American slang term often heard in these debates)[1] by the party in power to the permanent disablement of their opponents. "We will accept your bill," was in effect the declaration of the official leaders of the Opposition, "only on condition that you lay on the table at once your scheme for redistributing seats." A motion to that effect by Lord John Manners on the second reading was defeated by a majority of 130, eight times the margin whereby the Government had escaped defeat on the vote of censure, and the bill went off to the Lords in July. Not, however, before the disintegration of the Opposition had become more manifest than ever, and the famous Fourth Party had been broken up. Lord Randolph Churchill, who at a meeting in Edinburgh in the preceding autumn had declared emphatically against

Break up of the Fourth Party, 1884.

[1] Often written "jerrymander," thereby obscuring its origin. The term was coined on the analogy of "salamander" from the name of an American politician, Elbridge Gerry.

the Reform Bill which the Prime Minister was then understood to be preparing, and who had also voted against the second reading, when the bill came to be considered in Committee performed what he afterwards described as "the only sharp curve" in his parliamentary career, throwing all his weight upon the side of Ministers and coming into fiery collision with "the old gang" on the front Opposition bench.[1] In this course Mr. Balfour declined to follow his guerrilla chief, and was no longer to be reckoned among the free lances. Mr. Gorst also, nettled by Churchill's brusque rejection of his advice upon questions of party organisation, drew apart into gloomy isolation; there remained faithful only Sir Henry Wolff, whose quips and sallies hurt nobody, and served to amuse the House. The Fourth Party continued to sit together, indeed, but their glittering arms were as often turned against each other as against the Government.

The bill rejected by the Lords, 8th July 1884.

The Franchise Bill met its doom in the Upper Chamber on 8th July, the Lords refusing, by a majority of fifty-nine, to create a new electorate until the Government had tabled a scheme for redistribution of seats. Here, then, were the two Houses once more in

[1] In the debates in Committee, Churchill made Mr. W. H. Smith the specia subject of pungent satire. Smith, a man of great wealth amassed in trade, dwelt upon the gravity of largely increasing the Irish vote by enfranchising dwellers in mud cabins. "I have heard," retorted Churchill, "a great deal of this mud-cabin argument. For that we are indebted to the brilliant, ingenious, and fertile mind of the right honourable member for Westminster. I suppose that in the minds of the lords of suburban villas—of the owners of vineries and pineries" [Mr. Smith's gardens at Greenlands were famous], "the mud cabin represents the climax of physical and social degradation. But the franchise in England has never been determined by Parliament with respect to the character of the dwellings. The difference between the cabin of the Irish peasant and the cottage of the English agricultural labourer is not so great as that which exists between the abode of the right honourable member for Westminster and the humble roof which shelters from the storm the individual who now has the honour to address the Committee.

> "*Non ebur, neque aureum*
> *Meâ renidet in domo lacunar;*
> *Non trabes Hymettiæ*
> *Premunt columnas ultimâ recisas*
> *Africâ.*"

This was the last instance of classical quotation which the present writer can remember to have heard in debate, except on two subsequent occasions by Mr. Gladstone and Sir William Harcourt.

collision upon the most dangerous of all grounds. Popular feeling, hitherto somewhat languid in regard to the bill, was fanned to angry fervour by the action of the Peers, which the Liberal press and speakers represented as a mere subterfuge. A procession of agricultural labourers through London was organised, and Mr. John Morley preached "the mending or ending" of the House of Lords to an excited meeting of Liberal delegates in St. James's Hall. Yet there was little or no rioting. A few heads and much furniture were broken by an onslaught of Birmingham Radicals upon a Conservative meeting at Aston Park, but the billows were subsiding before Parliament reassembled again in November.

It is a commonplace of comment on our constitution that the Sovereign reigns, but does not rule. Happily we have not sunk to such a level of make-believe as to sterilise the due influence of the most ancient source of authority. Queen Victoria had lived in great seclusion since her widowhood; but, little as it was suspected by the mass of her subjects, she had never relaxed her vigilance towards the affairs of state nor waived her prerogative of controlling criticism. So now, while the country was ringing with inflammatory rhetoric from a hundred platforms, her Majesty set her hand to effect reconciliation and compromise. She took the unusual, perhaps unprecedented, course of bringing about a personal conference between Ministers and Opposition leaders.

The Queen's interposition, Oct. 1884.

"Although the strong expressions used by Ministers in their recent speeches have made the task of conciliation undertaken by the Queen a most difficult one, she is so much impressed with the importance of the issue at stake that she has persevered in her endeavours, and has obtained from the leaders of the Opposition an expression of their readiness to negotiate on the basis of Lord Hartington's speech at Hanley. In the hope that this *may* lead to a compromise, the Queen has suggested that Lord Hartington may enter into communication with Lord Salisbury, and she trusts, from Mr. Gladstone's telegram received this morning, that he will empower Lord Hartington to discuss the possibility of an agreement with Lord Salisbury."[1]

[1] The Queen to Mr. Gladstone, 11th October 1884.

In this manner did the unseen hand ease the groaning engine of Government. Gladstone acknowledged the Queen's "well-timed efforts to bring about an accommodation." Lord Hartington and Sir Michael Hicks-Beach laid their heads together in common understanding that the county householder was to be enfranchised; Salisbury and Northcote discussed redistribution with Gladstone and Sir Charles Dilke over the teacups in Downing Street, until the Prime Minister was able to inform the Queen on 27th November that "the delicate and novel communications" had ended in a satisfactory agreement, adding that "his cordial acknowledgments are due to Lord Salisbury and Sir Stafford Northcote for the manner in which they have conducted their difficult communications."[1] Parliament had met for an autumn session on 23rd October; before it adjourned for the Christmas holidays the Franchise Bill had become law and the Redistribution Bill had received a second reading in the Commons. It is difficult to imagine how this pacific result could have been brought about—how this *dignus vindice nodus* could have been unloosed—without serious convulsion, had the Queen been restrained from using her influence. Among the memories of her long reign none is to be cherished more proudly by British citizens than the touching words she wrote to the Prime Minister in acknowledging his announcement of the success of the negotiations—"To be able to be of use is all I care to live for now."

Friendly conferences upon Redistribution, Nov. 1884.

The Franchise Bill passed, 6th Dec. 1884.

[1] Morley's *Gladstone*, iii. 139.

CHAPTER VII

Split in the Cabinet—Confusion of the Opposition—Fall of the Government—Mr. Gladstone resigns—The "Cabinet of Caretakers"—Was there a Tory-Parnellite compact?—Lord Carnarvon's dealings with Parnell—Lord Ashbourne's Land Purchase Act—Third Midlothian campaign—Gladstone is converted to Home Rule—Lord Carnarvon resigns—The new Parliament meets—Defeat and resignation of Government—Gladstone's third Administration—Mr. Chamberlain and Mr. Trevelyan resign—The First Home Rule Bill—Defeat of the Government.

It would be difficult to say upon which side of the House of Commons prevailed most confusion at the beginning of the session of 1885. The Cabinet were on the brink of foundering over the question of renewing the Crimes Act, which would expire in August, and without which Lord Spencer declared he could not continue responsible for the government of Ireland. His urgent demand for a renewal of the Act was strenuously opposed by all the Ministers in the House of Commons, except Lord Hartington. They declared that the Radicals would vote solid against continuing coercion, and that it could only be carried by support of the Tories.

Split in the Cabinet, Feb. 1885.

Then there was the Egyptian imbroglio to be justified and the abandonment of General Gordon to be defended—questions upon which they could not reckon for the support of moderate Liberals; and upon which, as aforesaid, Government only managed to hold their own on 27th February by the narrow majority of fourteen.[1]

Turning to the Opposition benches, no milder term than chaos serves to describe the condition of their occupants. Northcote still sat facing the Prime Minister, his old colleagues supporting him loyally, and country members yielding him dumb and docile allegiance; but the rapier and rosette group below the gangway had not spent four years in flouting him openly in the House and deriding his tame tactics in con-

Confused state of the Opposition, Feb. 1885.

[1] See page 119, *supra*.

clave, more or less secret, without seriously undermining his authority. The younger Conservatives recognised their real leader in Lord Randolph Churchill. Despite the mischievous and preposterous title of Tory-Democrat with which he had chosen to label the Fourth Party—a title which never did and never could mean anything but readiness to outbid the Radicals in promises to the proletariat —he it was who had caused the antique machinery of Conservative organisation to be "scrapped," and framed an effective electioneering engine in the National Union; he alone it was whose fiery shafts could find the joints in Gladstone's harness and rouse that old lion of debate to impassioned reprisal. The mere whisper, "Randolph's up!" used to bring members streaming into the House from library and smoking-room, tea-room and terrace. What wonder, then, that Churchill drew to himself that involuntary homage which is ever his meed who can prove himself at once dauntless and wary? or that it was to him rather than to the bland Northcote that the Tory rank and file turned for guidance?

Seamed with distrust and seething with impatience, the Conservative ranks offered a striking contrast to the Irish contingent of the Opposition, where discipline reigned as it had never reigned before in a political party. Under Parnell's iron rule there was no exercise of individual volition. Fifty-nine Irishmen were at their leader's beck. Many of them were far more fluent and able in debate than himself. Compared with their gifts of speech, Parnell's slow, mordant delivery was dull hearing; but he knew how to turn their talents to best account—the earnest pleading of O'Connor Power, the versatile virulence of Timothy Healy, the sombre acrimony of John Dillon, the hysterical histrionics of William O'Brien, the limitless volubility of Thomas Sexton, the intolerable iteration of the brothers Harrington. He used these as a skilled general does his *corps d'élite*, whether in combined assault upon the enemy's position or holding them in reserve for action at a critical moment. That was his method in pitched battles; but never for a moment did he act otherwise than in presence of an enemy. No matter how

remote from Irish interests was the subject under discussion —be it a London Water Bill or one to abolish pigeon-shooting—a picket of Irish members was always told off to watch the debate. By ceaseless enforcement of this system, which reduced the Irish representatives to the level of automata set in motion at his will, Parnell created an instrument without parallel for efficiency in the history of Parliament, and, as will be shown presently, achieved a result which in 1885 was still deemed outside the realm of the conceivable.

The Prime Minister did what he could to strengthen his Cabinet on its unstable footing. Two years and a half as Irish Secretary—successor to the murdered Cavendish—had turned Mr. Trevelyan's [1] comely hair and beard from raven to snow; he now accepted relief from that arduous post by entering the Cabinet as Chancellor of the Duchy. Lord Rosebery, also, having served apprenticeship as Under-Home-Secretary, became Lord Privy Seal and First Commissioner of Works. Yet so notorious was the dissension still agitating the atmosphere of Downing Street that no prudent investor would have given a month's purchase for the emoluments of Ministers.

The end came, as often it had done to ministries, in unexpected guise. The Chancellor of the Exchequer, Mr. Childers, had to confess to a deficit of fifteen millions in his budget. True that the vote of credit,[2] cordially supported by the Conservative Opposition, accounted for eleven millions thereof; but it was hard upon Ministers who had proclaimed themselves in advance as the true exponents of economy and retrenchment that they should be the first to swell the national expenditure to more than one hundred millions. Childers proposed to meet the deficit by raising the income tax from 6d. to 8d., increasing the duty on beer and spirits, and suspending the sinking fund. Hicks-Beach [3] moved an amendment, ingeniously framed to unite all sections of the Opposition including the Irish, condemning the increased duty on spirits and beer, the drinks of the working

[1] Now Sir George Trevelyan.

[2] See page 122, *supra*.

[3] Sir Michael Hicks-Beach was the only member of "the old gang" whom Churchill admitted to his confidence.

classes, without a corresponding increase on wine, the drink of the well-to-do. Beach had cast his net beyond the boundaries of the Opposition. Lord Morley attributes the success of this draught to "a combination between Tories and Irish that proved of cardinal importance to policies and parties for several critical months to come."[1] But that combination had often taken place before, as was natural between two distinct parties sitting in opposition. What made it fatal to Ministers was the action of that section of their supporters whereof Lord Morley was already a distinguished member.[2] Mr. Chamberlain and Sir Charles Dilke had both threatened to make their suspended resignation operative if beer were taxed without a corresponding duty on wine. Radicals below the gangway were of like mind; so when a division was called on a night in June (the 8th), seventy-four ministerialists did not answer the summons, and six of them voted against the Government, a defection which placed the Conservative Opposition, strengthened by the votes of thirty-nine Irish Home Rulers, in a majority of twelve.

Fall of the Government, 1885.

The truth is that the Government had courted this defeat as the least discreditable means of escape from *impasse* in the Cabinet. The ministry could not have held together many days longer; let them therefore fall with their weapons turned against the common foe rather than against each other. Accordingly, the whips did not press their men to return after the dinner hour, and wilful abstention thus became indistinguishable from ordinary casual absence.

When Gladstone tendered his resignation to the Queen next day, her Majesty expressed some surprise that he should treat his reverse as fatal. Gladstone reminded her that to depart from the precedent of holding budget proposals as matter vital to the life of a ministry would be to lower parliamentary government. But the Duke of Argyll expressed the true state of the case when he said that, if you saw a man coming along the street with a particularly elastic

Mr. Gladstone resigns, 9th June 1885.

[1] Morley's *Gladstone*, iii. 200.

[2] He entered Parliament in 1883.

step and a joyful countenance, you might lay odds that it was a member of the late Cabinet. No personality less puissant than Gladstone's could have kept his Whig and Radical colleagues round the same table so long as he had done; even his ascendency was not equal to keeping them together any longer. It was a relief to both wings of the Cabinet when release came instead of rupture.

But what had the Conservative Opposition gained by their victory, won as it had been by the votes of Home Rulers? Well might some of the older hands mutter *non tali auxilio*, and argue that it would be safer and wiser if Lord Salisbury, instead of attempting a government, were, by declining the attempt, to leave his great adversary the task of extricating the country from the difficulties, foreign and domestic, into which he had led it. Either that, or to ask the Queen to dissolve the Parliament. It happened that the latter alternative could hardly be considered open at the time. Enormous addition had been made to the electorate by the Act of 1884; the old constituencies had been redistributed, but there had been no time to make up the register, which, it had been specially arranged, should be ready in the autumn in order that the sense of the new constituencies might be taken. The other alternative, a refusal by Lord Salisbury to undertake the government, would have been an evasion of the direct result of the action of his friends in the House of Commons. Moreover it would have discouraged, disgusted, and wholly alienated the most energetic of those friends who felt entitled to the fruits of victory.

But what would those fruits prove to be? Apples of Sodom, likely to fill the mouth with ashes. For the Crimes Act was on the point of expiring; agrarian violence was rampant in Ireland; Lord Salisbury could hardly expect to maintain order in that country without extraordinary powers, still less to obtain a renewal of those powers from a House in which his supporters were in a minority of 100. Of such a kind were the reflections that, in the minds of the older Conservatives, tempered the exhilaration of victory, and they drew comfort from Salisbury's hesitation in accepting office. When the Queen

summoned him to Balmoral on 11th June, he recommended her Majesty to invite Gladstone to reconsider his resignation. Gladstone having declined (13th June) even to consult his colleagues upon the question, Salisbury asked him for an assurance of co-operation in winding up the affairs, financial and others, of the session. Such assurance Gladstone flatly declined to give, wherefore Salisbury told the Queen that it was not in his power to serve her usefully. The Queen having returned to Windsor on 18th June, received Gladstone in audience, who could not find it in him to repeat to his Sovereign the refusal he had given to his opponent in politics. He offered a half-hearted assurance; not enough for Salisbury, who retired to Hatfield (20th June). The Queen continued to ply Gladstone with persuasion; it was not until her private secretary, Sir Henry Ponsonby, had paid him *six* visits on 22nd June that he yielded, and next day the first stage of the crisis was ended by Salisbury undertaking to form a ministry.

The second stage proved hardly less electrical than the first. Northcote accepted Salisbury's invitation to become Chancellor of the Exchequer and Leader in the Commons. Next, the Colonial Office was filled by Sir M. H. Beach; the third offer, that of the India Office to Lord Randolph Churchill, brought matters to a hitch. To enter the Cabinet *per saltum* at six-and-thirty might suffice for any man of ordinary ambition, but Churchill's ambition stretched far beyond ordinary aims. He declined to join the Government if Northcote were to be leader in the Commons.[1] Salisbury's spirit was as high as Churchill's, but it proved not to be as dogged. The refusal of a single individual, who had never held office, to enter his Cabinet, except on conditions which he was not prepared to grant,[2] may not have inclined him to modify his plans. But the case was altered when Sir

Lord Salisbury's first Administration, 23rd June 1885–27th Jan. 1886.

[1] "Whether I was right or wrong I do not argue: public opinion in the party and outside was certainly not with me, and soon after, and since, I have been strongly drawn to the conclusion that I was in error." Memorandum by Lord R. Churchill (Winston Churchill's *Life of Lord R. Churchill*, i. 407).

[2] "I am bound to Sir S. N. as a colleague, by a tie, not of expediency, but of honour: and I could not take part in anything which would be at variance with entire loyalty to him." (Salisbury to Churchill, April 1885.)

Michael Hicks-Beach told him that, believing Churchill's popularity in the country to be the main ground upon which could be based any hope of success at the coming elections, he must decline to join any administration from which Churchill should be excluded. Looking to the limited materials at hand, Salisbury might well feel disposed to throw up an enterprise for which he had never felt much gusto—the formation of a "ministry of caretakers." Probably he would have done so, but for the friendly intervention of Mr. Gibson[1] and Mr. W. H. Smith, the latter of whom had shared with Northcote the bitterest insults of the Fourth Party.[2] Smith knew that Northcote's occasional lethargy was owing to heart disease, and managed to persuade his old and intimate friend to solve the difficulty by accepting an earldom and the sinecure office of First Lord of the Treasury.

After that all was plain sailing. Not only did Churchill take office, but, Mr. Balfour having already accepted the Presidency of the Local Government Board, Gorst was made Solicitor-General, Wolff was sworn of the Privy Council, and so the whole of the quondam Fourth Party "arrived." The new ministry was complete on 23rd June.

The "Cabinet of Caretakers," 1885-86.

There remained the dark—the towering difficulty about the Crimes Act, which, more than any other consideration, had deterred Salisbury from undertaking the government. Whatever motives may have inspired him in earlier life, no man ever was more devoid of personal ambition than he was at fifty-five. An eager student of natural science, all his inclination was for retirement; it was outweighed only by a strong sense of public duty. No mere difficulty should induce him to disappoint his party, if there were any way through the difficulty. Preliminary, therefore, to any step towards collecting a Cabinet, he consulted Mr. Gibson, the only high authority upon Irish affairs on the Conservative front bench,[3] as to the possibility of governing Ireland by

[1] Created Lord Ashbourne on becoming Irish Lord Chancellor in 1885.

[2] Churchill used in private to dub Sir R. Cross and Smith "Marshall and Snelgrove"; and the private observations of rising politicians soon become public property.

[3] He had been Irish Attorney-General 1877–80.

the ordinary law. Many considerations must have conspired to make it hard for Mr. Gibson to give an unprejudiced opinion. Of sanguine temperament, his Irish voice and hearty manner had been the comfort of his party in many a tough fight against odds. Not for him was the part of Micaiah, the son of Imlah;[1] he could not, an he would, take a desponding view; the condition of Ireland could hardly become worse than it was under Lord Spencer's rule, armed though he had been with the most drastic powers ever conferred upon a Lord-Lieutenant: there was a chance of improvement were the objectionable Act allowed to expire.

It was under these precarious conditions that the Cabinet of Caretakers entered upon their work. The conditions were not only precarious, but compromising. The entire Liberal-Radical party believed that there was a secret compact and working agreement between the new Government and the Parnellites. None held that belief more firmly than Gladstone himself, and this had so much to do with his seismic action in the immediate future that a brief examination of the nature of its foundation cannot be dispensed with.

Was there a Tory-Parnellite compact, 1885?

In May 1885 it was a matter of common knowledge that the Whig and Radical wings of the Cabinet had been at deadly issue about the renewal of the Crimes Act. On the 15th of that month the Prime Minister gave notice in the House that it would be renewed in part. Speaking at St. Stephen's Club on the 20th, Churchill warned his hearers against assuming that Ireland could not be governed without those arbitrary powers "which all the greatest orators of the Liberal party have over and over again declared is no remedy for lawlessness." He protested against the assumption that the Tory party, should they come into power, would ask for such power except "on evidence adduced." These sentiments were disapproved by the bulk of the Conservative party; but they never were publicly disavowed by the recognised Opposition leaders, whose silence was not unnaturally interpreted as consent.

[1] 1 Kings xxii. 16–28.

Churchill, indeed, went far beyond the measure of his speech in private *conciliabules*, as he called them afterwards, with Parnell. He received Parnell in his house in Connaught Place, and told him that if the Tories came in and he were given office, he would not consent to renew the Crimes Act. "In that case," said Parnell, "you will have the Irish vote at the elections."[1] Herein, beyond question, was a compact with the Parnellites; but it was personal between an unofficial Conservative from below the gangway and the Irish leader; it could not bind the Conservative leaders, being wholly unauthorised by them, and would have been indignantly repudiated by the party as a whole had it become known at the time.[2] Had these negotiations ended with the change of government, little more would have been heard of them. Few Ministers, Mr. Gladstone less than many others, can be held when in office to the letter of their professions when in Opposition. Churchill as Secretary of State might claim release from some, at least, of the associations he had formed as *franc tireur*.

Unhappily, certain transactions took place after the new government had taken office, which, all unknown to themselves, compromised the Conservative party far more gravely than any mere squabble or understanding about coercion. Among the offices at the disposal of a Prime Minister, there is none for which so few of his supporters are eligible as the Lord-Lieutenancy of Ireland. Besides possessing administrative capacity, precedent requires that the Lord-Lieutenant must be a nobleman of high degree and of sufficient wealth to spend £8000 or £10,000 of his private means in maintaining the viceregal establishment. Lord Salisbury's choice for this appointment being more than usually restricted by the necessity of finding a peer who would undertake the government of Ireland by the

[1] *Lord Randolph Churchill*, i. 395.

[2] Churchill lived to acknowledge the grievous error into which Lord Salisbury was led when he accepted office hampered by pledges not to renew the Crimes Act. "Looking back," he wrote in a memorandum upon these times, "on these events after January 1886, and after the resolution arrived at by Mr. Gladstone to introduce a measure for the repeal of the Union, I came to the conclusion that in June 1885 we had been most unfortunately inspired. I can trace a clear connection of cause and effect between Lord Salisbury's accession to office in 1885 and Mr. Gladstone's new departure in 1886." (Ibid., i. 411.)

ordinary law, fell upon Lord Carnarvon. Now in 1867 Carnarvon had taken up the scheme prepared by Cardwell for the federation of the North American Colonies, and, before his resignation in March of that year, had introduced the measure which afterwards became law. When he returned to the Colonial Office in 1874, he directed all his energy to promoting similar federation of the South African Colonies, and introduced a bill to that effect in 1877; but he resigned office a second time in January 1878 without having accomplished his purpose. His remedy for Irish sedition was federation; he had gone great lengths with Sir Gavan Duffy in discussing the feasibility of federal Home Rule, and the enthusiasm of his reception in Dublin betokened the belief of the Nationalists that their aspirations were about to be fulfilled.

Lord Carnarvon's dealings with Parnell, July 1885.

In July Carnarvon took the unwarrantable step of inviting Parnell to a secret interview in his empty house in Grosvenor Square, in order, as he afterwards explained, to obtain exact information as to the degree and kind of Home Rule that would satisfy the Irish parliamentary party. Surely the answer to that inquiry had been sufficiently dinned into all ears in and out of Parliament. Parnell had declared that, having taken off his coat for the struggle, he was determined not to put it on again until "the last legislative link that bound Ireland to England had been severed."

Carnarvon anxiously assured Parnell that he was acting on his own sole responsibility, and that his colleagues in the ministry were in no degree involved. Indeed those colleagues, Lord Salisbury excepted, were entirely ignorant that such an interview had been held, until Parnell disclosed it, with his version of what had taken place, in the House of Commons, 7th June 1886. Their indignation was as great as their surprise, and both were increased when, two years later, Carnarvon vouchsafed the information that he had told Salisbury that he was going to meet Parnell, and had "acquainted him with what passed between us at the interview, at the earliest possible moment."[1] Salisbury kept the information to himself, not thinking it expedient to

[1] Hansard, 325, 1179. 3rd May 1888.

trouble his colleagues with vain projects which neither he nor they would entertain for a moment.

For, after all, who was this Parnell? He was the author of boycotting, the tutor of an excitable peasantry in the demoniac craft that violated the cardinal principles of human society, the demagogue who, by his speech at Ennis in September 1880, had founded a system of terrorism which culminated, though it did not end, with the horrors of Maamtrasna and the Phœnix Park. He was the rebel leader who, when the Prince and Princess of Wales visited Ireland only a few weeks before the interview in Grosvenor Square, had bidden his countrymen to offer them no recognition.[1] The Heir Apparent was to be boycotted: black flags and insulting inscriptions took the place of a warm Irish welcome in the south.

This was the man with whom the Queen's representative in Ireland thought meet to hold *pourparlers;* not openly and before witnesses in the Irish Office, where any Irish member of Parliament might claim right of audience; but by stealth in a deserted house, with no one present to record what passed. And this, as afterwards came to light, with the foreknowledge and approval of the Prime Minister! Little wonder that the Conservatives were charged with having made a compact with the Parnellites! When Parnell asserted in the House of Commons on 7th June 1886, that at this interview Carnarvon had pledged his party to giving Ireland a statutory Parliament if they were returned in a majority at the general election, Carnarvon emphatically denied that there had been any such undertaking, but he admitted (10th June 1888) that he had expressed himself favourable to "some limited form of self-government not in any way independent of imperial control, such as might satisfy real local requirements and, *to some extent,* national aspirations." But, he contended, there neither was, nor could be, any compact, because he was acting without the knowledge of the rest of the Cabinet. The distinction was too finely drawn for the plain member of Parliament; had the transaction been brought to light at the time, it must have caused an

[1] See Parnell's letter in *United Ireland,* 11th April 1885.

immediate split in the Conservative camp; but by the time it came to public knowledge, a mighty convulsion had rent the Liberal party, dwarfing every minor and personal controversy into unimportance.

Gladstone's undertaking to the Queen not to embarrass the "Ministry of Caretakers" during what was left of the session, was honourably observed. It was all the easier to do so because of the centrifugal effect upon the House of Commons exercised by the approaching elections. Two millions of new electors had to be courted, and there was no more than time to do so effectively. Members and candidates who took the field in that summer will not readily forget the protracted labours of the canvass. For three, nearly four months, the country rang from end to end with electioneering. The work of Parliament ran with a smoothness unexampled in the memory of its oldest members. The new budget, the Indian budget, and all the votes in Supply were got through within six weeks, and time was found to pass the Housing of the Working Classes Act, making landlords liable for damages if they let insanitary dwellings; the Australian Federation Act, which, owing to the Governments of New South Wales and New Zealand declining to take advantage of its permissive enactments, remained inoperative for fifteen years; and the Secretary for Scotland Act, whereby a new department was created to manage Scottish education and local government, and to discharge several of the functions hitherto vested in the Home Secretary.

In carrying through these measures the "Caretakers" were but finishing work left half-done by their predecessors in office; but they also found time for one original bit of legislation. Its author, Mr. Edward Gibson, had become Lord Chancellor for Ireland, the first holder of that dignity to be admitted to the Cabinet. The Land Act of 1881 had authorised the advance by the State of three-fourths of the purchase-money to Irish tenants buying their holdings from the landlords. Lord Ashbourne's Act provided for advancing the whole, up to a limit of five millions sterling.

Ashbourne's Land Purchase Act, 1885.

Parnell now formulated his demands in speeches at Arklow on 21st August and Dublin on the 24th. Hitherto he had been willing to accept the central council at Dublin for administrative purposes only, as proposed by Mr. Chamberlain during the winter of 1884–5, warmly approved by Mr. Gladstone, and only abandoned by him because he could not carry his Whig colleagues with him. Now nothing would satisfy Parnell but an independent executive and Parliament, with power to protect Irish industries against English competition. The challenge was immediately taken up by Lord Hartington, who told his constituents at Waterfoot on 29th August that it was impossible that Parnell's terms could be wrung from any political party. On 8th September Chamberlain, representing the Radical wing of the late Cabinet, pronounced not less emphatically than the Whig Hartington against Parnell's proposals. Gladstone, returning from a trip abroad, was profoundly embarrassed by these frank utterances. His purpose was to hold his "umbrella" (to quote a homely metaphor of Lord Rosebery's) that all sorts and conditions of Liberals might take their stand under it. He was in his seventy-seventh year, yet his intellect and some, at least, of his principles had lost none of their plasticity. He believed that the Tories were incubating some measure "to dish the Whigs" by satisfying the Irish Home Rulers; his correspondence with Granville and Derby shows that he had begun to toy with the notion of complete surrender to the Parnellites in the event of the elections leaving him dependent on their support.

Still more significant of the germination of that idea was his reception of a project of Home Rule laid before him in private correspondence by Childers in September. "I have a decided sympathy with the general scope and spirit of your proposed declaration about Ireland," he wrote on 28th September, adding a warning against "binding yourself at present to any details, or going beyond general indications." "This will be a great step in advance; and anything you may say beyond it, I should like to see veiled in language not such as to commit you."[1]

[1] Morley's *Gladstone*, iii. 236.

Qui nescit dissimulare nescit regnare. Gladstone was past master in the craft of veiling purpose in language, and he proceeded to do so in his third Midlothian campaign upon which he set forth early in November. He had no objection to Childers sending up a *ballon d'essai;* meantime he would not commit himself till the result of the polls should show him which way the wind was blowing. He had plenty to tell the Lothian electors about Ireland; but he reserved for a speech in Flintshire on 30th November the only one among his voluminous references to that country that could not be interpreted as favourably by Nationalists as by Unionists—namely, his entreaty for such a majority as would make the Liberal party independent of the Irish party. "It will be a vital danger to the country and the empire if, at a time when a demand from Ireland for larger powers of self-government is to be dealt with, there is not in Parliament a party totally independent of the Irish vote."

Third Midlothian campaign, Nov. 1885.

To Parnell's direct challenge at Liverpool on 10th November for a plain statement of his intentions in regard to Home Rule, Gladstone had replied at West Calder on the 17th by declaring that it would be inexcusable in him, as a member of the Opposition, to assume responsibility which rested only with Ministers. Parnell's purpose was the exact reverse of Gladstone's, and most adroitly did he effect it. He aimed at applying the Irish vote in British constituencies so as to give neither Conservatives nor Liberals an independent majority. He replied on the 21st to Gladstone's fencing speech on the 17th, by a manifesto calling upon all Irishmen to vote against the Liberals. "In 1880 the Liberal party promised peace, and it afterwards made unjust wars; economy, and its budget reached the highest point yet attained; justice to aspiring nationalities, and it mercilessly crushed the national movement in Egypt under Arábi Pasha. To Ireland, more than to any other country, it bound itself by the most solemn pledges. It denounced coercion, and it practised a system of coercion more brutal than any previous administration, Liberal or Tory."

No commander ever manœuvred his forces to more

signal effect than did Parnell. The Irish vote in Great Britain was given to Conservative candidates, with the result that the number of Liberals returned—335—was exactly the same as the total 249 Conservatives and 86 Nationalists.[1]

Result of the elections, Dec. 1885.

The chief subject of that "depth of meditation" in which we have been told Gladstone passed the month after the election may easily be divined.[2] More firmly convinced than ever that the Conservative leaders had bound themselves by privy compact to the Parnellites,[3] he came to the final determination that such an unhallowed alliance must be broken up. That could only be done by anticipating any declaration of policy which the Government might announce in the speech from the throne. At first, indeed, he inclined to settling the question of Irish government by agreement between the two great parties, and he made some overtures in that direction to Mr. A. J. Balfour, who, though not in the Cabinet, was a member of the Government and nearly related to the Prime Minister. He met with not the slightest encouragement in that quarter; indeed Churchill was at that very time pressing upon Lord Salisbury to approach the Whigs—Hartington, Goschen, and Rosebery—with a view to a coalition against Home Rule.[4] Meanwhile, whether advisedly or accidentally, a startling insight into the tendency of Gladstone's "depth of meditation" was given at the very time of his abortive negotiation with Mr. Balfour. On 17th December a paragraph appeared simultaneously in the *Standard* and the *Leeds Mercury* announcing that

Gladstone is converted to Home Rule, 16th Dec. 1885.

Mr. Gladstone was prepared to deal with Home Rule by creating an Irish Parliament for the transaction of all legislative and administrative affairs affecting Ireland, subject to the maintenance of the Empire intact, the authority of the Crown, and the supremacy of the Imperial Parliament. This statement

[1] The estimate at the Liberal headquarters had been for a majority of 40 over Conservatives and Nationalists combined. (Morley's *Gladstone*, iii. 246.)

[2] Ibid., 256.

[3] "The Nationalists have run in political alliance with the Tories for years: more especially for six months: most of all at the close during the elections. . . The alliance is therefore at its zenith." (Mr. Gladstone to Mr. Herbert Gladstone, 10th Dec. 1885.)

[4] W. Churchill's *Lord Randolph Churchill*, ii. 6–20.

caused a violent sensation, not to be allayed by the guarded disclaimer which Gladstone communicated to the Central Press agency.

"The statement is not an accurate representation of my views, but is, I presume, a speculation on them. It is not published with my knowledge or authority, nor is there any other beyond my own public declarations."

Now it has been affirmed, and the belief is still held by many of those who consider the current history of their country a subject worthy of attention, that the Conservative leaders had hitherto maintained a secret understanding with the Parnellite party, and that it was this indication of Gladstone's intention in regard to Home Rule that caused them to drop the alleged alliance.[1] That such a belief is without a shadow of fact as foundation may be seen from the correspondence of Lord Randolph Churchill, who, if any one, might be suspected of intriguing with the Nationalists, having fought shoulder to shoulder with them in many an onslaught upon the late Government.[2] There were those among the older Conservative members who distrusted him for that very reason. Let us glean from his own pen indications of his real intentions at this time, remembering that no hint of Gladstone's change of front leaked out before 16th December, and that Sir William Harcourt had spoken to the electors from the innermost Liberal council only a few days before—on the 7th—bidding them, with greater force than refinement, "let the Tories stew in their own Parnellite juice, and when they stink in the nostrils of the country, then the country will fling them, discredited and disgraced, to the constituencies." Let it be remembered also,

[1] "The rumour of Mr. Gladstone's advances towards Home Rule gave the Conservatives the opportunity they had long desired of appearing as the friends of the unity of the Empire." (*Annual Register*, 1885, p. 193.)

"The mysterious alliance with the Parnellite party, in which Lord Randolph Churchill had played such a prominent part, suddenly vanished into thin air." (Ibid., 1886, p. 306.)

[2] "I am not going to deny that at one time I had an idea that the Tory party might co-operate with the Irish party. I have often worked with Irish members. I hope to be able to do so again. . . . It has always appeared to me that the Tory party were well qualified to deal with many questions of Irish interest in a manner agreeable to the Irish people, and not in the least dangerous to the general welfare of the British Empire. I particularly allude to the question of education and the question of the land." (Lord R. Churchill in the House of Commons, 4th March 1886.)

in examining this grave charge, that, before the dissolution of 1885, Churchill had become perfectly reconciled with Lord Salisbury, and exercised more powerful influence in the Cabinet than any other member thereof, saving perhaps his special confederate, Hicks-Beach.

On 29th November, during the progress of the elections, Churchill wrote to Salisbury, entreating him to form a coalition with the Whigs:

"You will never get Whig support so long as I am in the Government, and Whig support you must have. I should like to contribute effectively to your getting it [by resigning the India Office to Hartington]. . . . I believe that by some process of this kind you could institute a government which would keep the Parnellites and Radicals at bay for years; and, after all, that is what must be arrived at." [1]

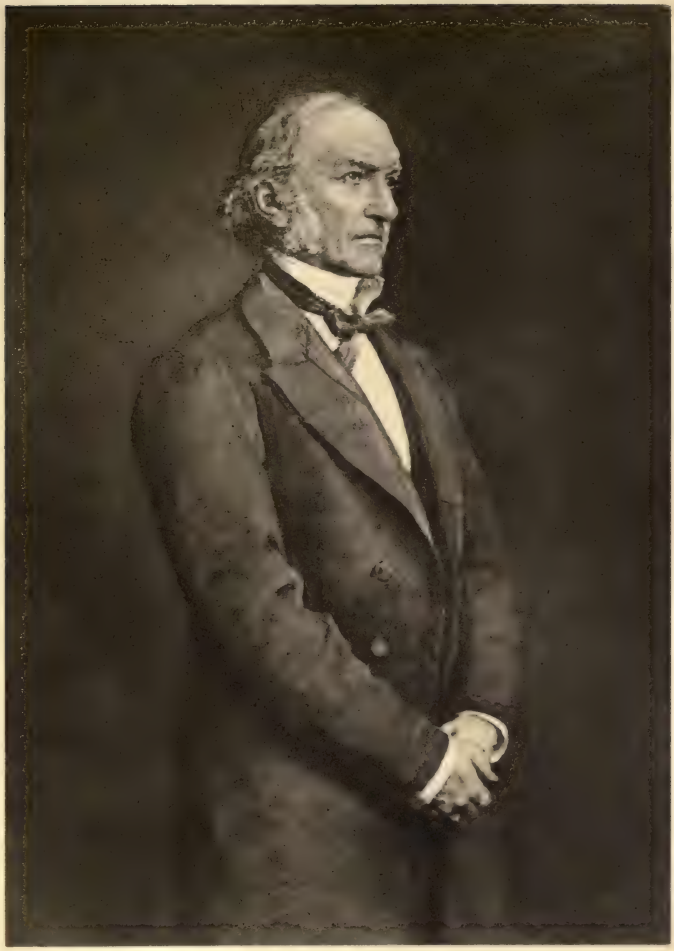
Again on 1st December he laid before Salisbury a long and detailed memorandum upon his views of the policy to be pursued, winding up with—"The success of the foregoing turns upon Ireland. I assume two facts, (1) that coercion is impossible now; (2) that anything in the nature of an Irish Parliament is impossible always." [2]

In the interval between this and Churchill's next letter to his Chief, the Government had to endure such inconvenience as was caused by the resignation of the Lord-Lieutenant, Lord Carnarvon, whose coquetry with Parnell had led him to give certain pledges to Mr. Justin M'Carthy; and now, said he, I cannot continue in the Cabinet unless I propose some form of Home Rule. This brought Salisbury to face the question of whether to resign as a result of the general election or to meet Parliament in January. This question he referred to Hicks-Beach, Smith and Churchill for their opinion. Churchill reported their conclusion in favour of resignation, and the attention of readers is called to the reasons given for that course as being wholly incompatible with any compact with the Parnellites.

Resignation of Lord Carnarvon, 10th Dec. 1885.

"We came to the conclusion that if the Lord-Lieutenant insists on the choice being made between the adoption of his policy and resignation, the latter course becomes compulsory on us. If we

[1] Churchill's *Lord Randolph Churchill*, ii. 6. [2] Ibid., p. 13.



William Ewart Gladstone.

From the painting by Sir John Millais, P.R.A.

LONDON: EDWARD ARNOLD

go out merely on the ground of our parliamentary position, we remain for the purposes of opposition to Home Rule, as a party *totus teres atque rotundus;* but if that blessed man sets the signal for concession flying, our party will go to pieces, as it did on the Irish Land Act. The only hope for the country is to keep this present Tory party well together; and unfortunately Lord Carnarvon has it once more in his power, as on two former occasions, to disintegrate, demoralise and shatter."[1]

Again on 7th December, writing to Lord Chief-Justice Morris, Churchill refers to this memorandum wherein, says he, "I laid it down as an axiom that with regard to any policy towards Ireland in the nature of, or containing, an Irish Parliament, the attitude of the Tory party could only be an absolutely *non possumus* one."—"I cannot say," wrote Lord Salisbury, "how heartily I agree in the tone of your letter to Morris."

It is needless to multiply extracts all tending to prove the invincible resistance of the Conservative leaders to the cardinal element in Home Rule—an Irish Parliament—and therefore the impossibility of any kind of bargain or understanding with the Parnellites. Men in the heat of parliamentary strife might be justified in construing the events and signs of the times as indicating the existence of such a compact; but those who undertake in cool retrospect to sift facts out of the clouds of controversy ought surely to cease referring to what never had any existence.[2]

Salisbury decided not to follow the advice of his three colleagues by supplementing Carnarvon's resignation by that of the ministry. Indeed the premature disclosure of Gladstone's scheme converted the whole Cabinet to unanimity in resolving to meet Parliament. But the experiment of governing Ireland by the ordinary law—an experiment, be it said, which Salisbury's Cabinet never would have attempted had there been the faintest chance of their

[1] Churchill's *Lord Randolph Churchill*, pp. 21, 22. In writing these last words Churchill appears to have forgotten that when Carnarvon resigned in 1867, Lord Salisbury (then Lord Cranborne) did so also. See vol. ii. 335 of the present work; and for Carnarvon's second resignation, vol. iii. pp. 56, 57, 62, 63.

[2] Morley's *Gladstone*, iii. 260, 274. Mr. Herbert Paul, a strong Radical, is perfectly fair in dealing with the alleged alliance. Commenting upon the frequency with which Tories and Parnellites voted together in Opposition, he remarks: "This conjunction implied no alliance. There is only one lobby in the House for those who wish to vote against a government." (*Modern England*, v. 342.)

obtaining a renewal of the powers exercised by Lord Spencer—that experiment, I say, had utterly broken down. The National League was paramount in all parts of Ireland except Ulster, enforcing its decrees by boycotting, terrorism, and "moonlighting." A bad instance of the last-named species of outrage took place near Castle Island in Kerry on 14th November, where Mr. J. Curtin's house was attacked by a gang of ruffians by night. Mr. Curtin was killed, but not before he had made a gallant defence, in the course of which three of the moonlighters were killed also. The necessity for protecting law-abiding citizens being the cardinal reason for government by any party, Salisbury persuaded a somewhat reluctant Cabinet[1] to agree to the insertion in the Queen's speech of a paragraph foreshadowing a demand for extraordinary powers—in other words, for a renewal of coercion.

Parliament meets for business, 21st Jan. 1886.

Parliament met to be sworn on 12th January, and for business on 21st January 1886. The Irish Secretary, Sir William Hart-Dyke, had followed his Chief, Carnarvon, into retirement, and Mr. W. H. Smith gave up the War Office in order to undertake the duties of the least desirable post in the Government. On the 23rd he went over to Dublin to be sworn in. As his baggage was being taken on a car from the station to the Chief Secretary's Lodge, his sword fell off, and getting between the wheel-spokes was snapped asunder. In an older time men would have accounted this an evil augury; and, sure enough, when Smith reached London again at cock-crow on the 26th, the first news that greeted him was that the ministry was out! They had fallen over an amendment to the Address, which had no closer connection with the Irish question, dominating all others, than it had with the art of clam-scaling. It was a full-dress presentation of Mr. Jesse Collings's famous plan of "three acres and a cow," a proposition towards which the Conservative party was favourably inclined; but it is a point in parliamentary etiquette well understood that any addition

Defeat and resignation of ministry, 25th–26th Jan. 1886.

[1] Winston Churchill's *Lord R. Churchill*, ii. 35–40.

to, or abatement from the legislation set forth in the speech from the throne involves a vote of want of confidence in the Government. The amendment was carried by 331 votes against 252, leaving Ministers in a minority of 79. The actual majority of Liberals over Conservatives was only 5; for 74 Parnellites voted in the majority. Coming events cast their shadows before in the shape of sixteen Liberals, including Lord Hartington, Mr. Goschen, and Sir Henry James, who voted with the Government, while 56 others were absent.

Thus ended the reign of the "Caretakers," one of the briefest administrations on record, to be followed by one even more brief, for Gladstone's third administration lasted only five months and twenty days. But within the span of those hundred and forty-eight days was concentrated all that agonising tension which racked the nation during fifteen months in 1831–32, aggravated by a rupture of comradeship such as embittered the close of Peel's public service.

Gladstone's third administration, 1st Feb.–8th June 1886.

Down to this point Gladstone had vouchsafed no explanation to the public of his intentions regarding Home Rule, but he had taken his old colleagues into his confidence, and was already aware that he could not look for help from some of those who had left office with him six months before. He received the Queen's commands on 1st February, and proceeded to form a Cabinet, proposing, as he explained to each individual united, "to examine whether it is or is not practicable to comply with the desire widely prevalent in Ireland . . . for the establishment by statute of a legislative body to sit in Dublin, and to deal with Irish, as distinguished from Imperial, affairs."

Hartington, Bright, Goschen, Derby, Selborne and Northbrook all declined to join a ministry which admitted the possibility of even partial repeal of the Act of Union. So did Sir Henry James, whose refusal cost him the Woolsack—the wealthiest prize in the party lottery. Mr. Chamberlain and Mr. Trevelyan accepted office with misgiving, from which Mr. John Morley was perfectly free when he undertook the Irish Secretaryship, for he had

been an outspoken advocate of Irish autonomy at the autumn election.[1]

These refusals were "persistently regarded" by Gladstone as a Whig revolt[2]—the purging of the Liberal party of its aristocratic ancestry. But inasmuch as my Lords Spencer, Granville and Rosebery accepted office, and that John Bright, followed later by Chamberlain and Trevelyan declined it, the line of cleavage did not coincide with the stratification.[3] It was drawn in accord with the ease with which certain men could divest themselves of pledges publicly given and of convictions hitherto cherished and professed. Vulgar greed of office had nothing to do with the action of these men: they stood far above reach of any suspicion on that score. It was because they could not believe their chief could lead them wrong that

"Faith unfaithful kept them falsely true."

And certes, they had but to look over the course upon which the young Tory member for Newark had entered fifty-two years before, to see how thickly it was cumbered with wreckage and strewn with jettison, and to realise what reassuring warrant and precedent there was for successful change of front.

Gladstone did his best to satisfy the impatience of Parliament and the public for a full disclosure of his scheme. The business of re-electing Ministers was not over till the middle of February. On 13th March the Prime Minister laid before the cabinet his double project for establishing a parliament in Dublin and buying out the Irish landlords. Chamberlain and Trevelyan immediately protested against the removal of Irish representation from Westminster, the transfer of the appointment of judges and magistrates to the Irish Parliament, and the concession of

Mr. Chamberlain and Mr. Trevelyan resign, 26th March 1886.

[1] "Ashbourne was commenting last night on the fact that Archbishop Walsh had swallowed John Morley's atheism. 'Ah,' said [Chief-Justice] Morris, 'John Morley spells God with a small g; but he spells Gladstone with a big G, and that satisfies the Archbishop!'" (Lord R. Churchill to Lord Salisbury, 29th March 1886.)

[2] Morley's *Gladstone*, iii. 293.

[3] Lord Dalhousie, head of an old Whig house, succeeded to the Scottish Office when Trevelyan resigned in March.

full power of taxation. They wished to resign at once. Gladstone was in dismay at revolt in the quarter where he looked for strongest support: he persuaded them to defer their decision. But at the next meeting on the 26th he showed so little inclination to conciliate them that they insisted upon resigning, and they were followed into retirement by two or three Ministers not of Cabinet rank.

The scene in the House of Commons on 8th April, when the Prime Minister moved for leave to bring in a Bill for the Better Government of Ireland, can never be forgotten by any one who witnessed it. The chamber is constructed to contain—it would be grossly misleading to say accommodate—some 400 out of its 670 members. Every member has an equal right to a seat, and on this occasion, the most momentous in half a century, every member wished to exercise that right. All that could be done was to set seventy or eighty chairs on the floor of the House. And the actors proved worthy of such an unexampled audience. "My speech," noted Gladstone in his diary, "which I have sometimes thought would never end, lasted nearly three and a half hours." Truly a marvellous performance for one in his seventy-eighth year; but the chief interest, as is usual after a Cabinet split, was concentrated upon the speeches of the seceding chiefs—the Whig Hartington and the Radical Chamberlain. The bill received a first reading without a division, as matter of course. It is contrary to the spirit of parliament to refuse a hearing to any legislative proposal.

The first Home Rule Bill, 8th April–7th June 1886.

The second reading was put down for 6th May; but Churchill having reminded the Prime Minister that this was the anniversary of the Phœnix Park murders, it was postponed till the 10th. Lord Hartington moved the rejection of the bill. The duty could not have been committed to one whose character commanded greater respect in all quarters of the House, reflecting as it did that "dogged veracity" which Dr. Johnson so warmly praised in the fourth Duke of Devonshire. On 7th June, the eighteenth night of debate (taking first and second reading together), fifty-five Radical dissentients met in Committee Room 13,

in response to Mr. Chamberlain's invitation to decide which of three courses they should take—support the bill, vote for it, or abstain from voting. John Bright was ill and absent, but he sent a letter which men spoke of afterwards as the death-warrant of Home Rule. When the division bells rang in the small hours of the 8th, the Chamberlain group marched into the "No" lobby; when the numbers were announced at the table a few minutes later the bill was dead—slain by 343 to 313 votes, a majority of 30 for the Opposition. Ninety-five Liberals, including tellers, voted against the bill.

Defeat of the Government, 8th June 1886.

It was the Tuesday in June corresponding to that on which Gladstone's second administration had been overthrown a year before.

CHAPTER VIII

Formation of Liberal-Unionist Party — Dissolution of Parliament — Lord Salisbury's second administration—Resignation of Lord R. Churchill—Death of Lord Iddesleigh — The Plan of Campaign — Criminal Law Amendment Act—Irish Land Act—The Round Table Conference—The Guillotine resolution—"Parnellism and Crime"—The Parnell Commission—Pigott's flight and suicide—Report of the Commission—Queen Victoria's Jubilee—The first Colonial Conference.

DURING the weeks in which the Home Rule Bill had been moving to its doom, the Liberal dissentients had been organising themselves under Lord Hartington's lead as a group independent of either the Government or Opposition. The Liberal-Unionists first appeared formally under that title at a great meeting held in Her Majesty's Theatre on 14th April to protest against the Irish policy of the Government. Lord Cowper, formerly Liberal Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland, presided, and upon the stage beside him sat those ancient antagonists Hartington and Salisbury, Goschen and W. H. Smith, Peter Rylands and David Plunket.[1] A momentous gathering, which must have brought to Gladstone's memory the far-off day when, as a Peelite Conservative, he became Chancellor of the Exchequer under the Whig Aberdeen in 1852. To quiet, clear-headed W. H. Smith it must have seemed the realisation of the hopes he expressed in 1865, when he first entered politics.[2] But there was to be no coalition or fusion between parties, only an alliance *ad hoc*, for the single purpose of defeating Gladstone's Irish Bill. The most experienced parliamentarians, however much they may have wished it, had no faith in

Formation of Liberal-Unionist party, 14th April 1886.

[1] Created Lord Rathmore in 1895.

[2] Writing to Colonel Taylor, the Tory Whip, he said: "I am not a member of the Conservative party as such, nor am I a member of the Liberal party, but I believe in Lord Palmerston, and look forward ultimately to a fusion of the moderate men following Lord Derby and Lord Palmerston into a strong Liberal-Conservative party, to which I should be glad to attach myself."

the permanence of such an alliance except for the single purpose; he would have been a rash prophet who had ventured to forecast that the alliance of Conservatives with Liberal-Unionists would ere long become a fusion in everything but name, leading ultimately to coalition, withstanding unimpaired the strain of a quarter of a century.

Dissolution of Parliament, 26th June 1886.

Meeting his Cabinet on the morrow of the great defeat, Gladstone found a section of his colleagues inclined for resignation. He would not hear of it; to haul down his flag would betoken submission: he insisted upon an immediate appeal to the people. He was to receive a decisive reply. His fourth Midlothian campaign lacked none of the force—his speeches lost much of the ambiguity—of former years, and he was returned without opposition. Everywhere else, Ireland apart, his forces met with disaster. The result of the elections in 1885 and 1886 compared thus—

1885		1886	
Liberals . . .	335	Conservatives . .	315
Conservatives . .	249	Liberal-Unionists .	78
Parnellites . .	86	Gladstonian Liberals	191
		Parnellites . .	86
	670		670

Lord Salisbury's second administration, 21st July 1886–10th Aug. 1892.

Unionists numbered 393 against 277 combined Gladstonian Liberals and Parnellites, being a majority of 116 against Home Rule. Gladstone accepted the verdict and resigned. The Queen sent for Salisbury, who, not unmindful upon whose motion the Home Rule Bill had been thrown out, and recognising that without the Liberal-Unionists he could not command a majority in the House, proposed that Hartington should be head of the new Government. This proposal was declined, as also one for a coalition Cabinet—a transaction showing an honourably disinterested spirit such as is not invariably attributed to, or displayed by, politicians. The surprise in the new Cabinet was the appointment of Lord Randolph Churchill as Chancellor of the Exchequer and Leader of the House of

Commons. His courses in Parliament had been meteoric —he was without a rival among Conservative members in debate; but confidence in his principles and methods was far from being as universal as admiration of his genius. Some thought him too young to preside over an assembly which possesses many advantages in larger measure than that of youth, albeit he was twelve years older than Pitt was when he became Prime Minister. Long years of peace have induced men to forget that most of the great work in this world has been transacted by men not past their meridian. Wellington and Napoleon were each but forty-six at Waterloo, and of all the French marshals and generals on that field there was but one older than they—*le vieux Kellermann*—and he was not fifty.

Misgivings, too soon to be justified, were completely allayed by Churchill's conduct of business during the six weeks session of the new Parliament, which ended on 25th September. In the debate on the Address he set forth the attitude of the Cabinet towards Ireland. Firm repression of disorder and crime, the creation of single ownership by means of the credit of the State, and grants of public money for developing fisheries, making light railways and arterial drainage—these were the main features in their specifically Irish policy; but above and beyond these was set a popular system of local government "in all the four countries which form the United Kingdom." He undertook that "definite proposals on that large scheme" would be made by the Government when Parliament should reassemble at the beginning of February.

When that time came Churchill was no longer in the Government. In a speech delivered at Dartford he had told his audience that "my own special object, to which I hope to devote whatever energy and strength or influence I may possess, is to endeavour to attain some genuine and considerable reduction of public expenditure and consequent reduction of taxation." To this end he applied himself with zeal in the construction of his budget, about which, as it never was laid before Parliament, it is enough to say that it was designed to relieve taxation upon lower-middle and working-class consumers, to reduce the income

tax from 8d. to 5d. (entailing a sacrifice of £4,870,000), to recoup the Exchequer by increasing the death and house duties, and to reduce the charge on the debt by £4,461,000 by a revision of Sir Stafford Northcote's sinking fund.[1] All this he might have effected with as little difficulty as Goschen encountered two years later; but when he laid before his colleagues a demand for a reduction of £1,300,000 in the public expenditure, a conflict began between the Treasury, the War Office and the Admiralty which brought matters to a speedy crisis. Lord George Hamilton managed to cut down the Admiralty estimates by £800,000; but W. H. Smith declined to "ask for less than the absolute minimum required for the safety of the country."[2]

On 20th December Churchill was summoned to Windsor, where the Queen discussed public affairs with him at great length. After dinner, leaving her presence without a syllable indicating his intention, he then and there wrote to the Prime Minister resigning his office. The terms of his letter left no room for remonstrance or negotiation.

Resignation of Lord R. Churchill, 20th Dec. 1886.

"The total 31 millions for the two services, which will in all probability be exceeded, is very greatly in excess of what I can consent to. . . . I am pledged up to the eyes to large reductions of expenditure, and I cannot change my mind in this matter. If the foreign policy of this country is conducted with skill and judgment, our present huge and increasing armaments are quite unnecessary."[3]

Nevertheless it was not till the morning of the 23rd that the announcement appeared in the *Times*, the effect whereof in the country generally and in the party it would

[1] In 1875 Northcote had assigned an annual fixed sum of £28,000,000 to cover interest and sinking fund on the National Debt, which then stood at £769,000,000, calculating thereby that it would be entirely paid off by the year 1930. Churchill perceived that in proportion as the capital debt was reduced (it had fallen to £637,000,000 in 1887) the taxpayer was contributing more largely to sinking fund than to interest. The charge for sinking fund being originally 2½d. in the pound, would rise progressively to 1s. in the pound before the debt was discharged. He proposed therefore to reduce the gross charge for the debt as above stated, thereby anticipating what Goschen did to a less extent when he succeeded Churchill.

[2] Winston Churchill's *Lord R. Churchill*, ii. 230.

[3] The estimates for 1887–8 were—Navy, £12,476,800; Army, £18,393,900; total, £30,870,700. Those for 1909–10 were—Navy, £35,142,700; Army £27,435,000; total, £62,577,700: more than doubled in twenty-five years.

be difficult to exaggerate. To Unionists it came as a staggering blow. In the admirable memoir of Lord Randolph by the hand of his accomplished son, the only pages which do not faithfully reflect the course of events at this agitated time are those which describe what the author believes to have been the feelings of the party in this crisis. The present writer's office in that administration was a very subordinate one;[1] such as it was, it brought him into constant touch with the party in the House of Commons, and he may be permitted to bear witness to the profound disappointment and regret which pervaded every section of that party. Members had learnt in the six weeks session to be proud of their brilliant leader and confident in his future guidance. Individuals there were, and ever will be in every party, crabbed in crotchets, acrid with envy or soured by disappointment; but the experience of a quarter of a century in the House of Commons, under four successive leaders, enables me to affirm without hesitation that none was assured of more loyal and whole-hearted devotion than Randolph Churchill received from the Unionist party. Indignation, indeed, was felt and forcibly expressed at his resignation at such a critical time. Many Unionists remembered, not without bitterness, how far they had strained their principles and suppressed their convictions in order to support the apostle of Tory-Democracy. They felt that they had earned a title to a measure of give-and-take upon a trivial point of economy. If it was a question of desertion, it was not the rank and file who deserted.

Well, he was gone—gone within three weeks of the date fixed for the opening of Parliament. To quote his own words: "In inflicting on the Old Gang this final fatal blow, I have mortally wounded myself."[2] No regard herein to the confusion into which his precipitate action might throw the ministry, which relied for its stability upon an alliance cemented in haste with part of the enemy's forces for an extraordinary and probably temporary purpose.

Hartington refused Salisbury's renewed invitation to join the Cabinet; wisely, as it turned out (though he was

[1] Junior Lord of the Treasury and Assistant-Whip.
[2] Letter to Lord Justice Fitzgibbon, 26th December 1886.

blamed at the time), for the Radical wing of the Liberal-Unionists, acting under Mr. Chamberlain, were busily negotiating for a *modus vivendi* with the Gladstonians.[1] Hartington might now have become Prime Minister had he so chosen, for Salisbury was willing, perhaps anxious, to resign that post for the more congenial one of Foreign Minister. But although Hartington would not be persuaded, he provided a most valuable hostage. Mr. Goschen, unable to follow the pace set by Gladstone, had declined office under him in 1880, and had not sat in any Cabinet since 1874. In 1886 he was not even in the House of Commons, having, as a Liberal-Unionist, lost his seat for East Edinburgh in the general election. It is not surprising, therefore, that Churchill, reckoning up the chances of reconciliation with his colleagues, should have overlooked a politician who had fallen out of the fighting line. It was said at the time, though the rumour has since been contradicted, that he admitted to a friend that he had "forgotten Goschen." Whether that was so or not, there can be little doubt that he had left him out of his calculations, and that the full consequences of his own act were only revealed to him when Goschen accepted the Chancellorship of the Exchequer.[2]

So there was the Unionist Government once more, *totus, teres atque rotundus;* the only results of the episode being the ruin of a fine career and the knitting of closer bonds between the wings of the Unionist party. There was an occasion when Churchill had derided Gladstone as "an old man in a hurry." He had now laid himself open to riposte by the substitution of "young" for "old."

Goschen was the new Chancellor of the Exchequer, an office which is usually combined with leadership of the Commons; but as a Liberal-Unionist he was not qualified to be set at the head of a party whereof four-fifths were Conservatives; so Salisbury handed over to W. H. Smith the office of First Lord of the Treasury, taking for himself

[1] Mr. Chamberlain's speech at Birmingham, proposing what developed into the "Round Table Conference," was made on the day Churchill's resignation was announced.

[2] Lord Algernon Percy vacated his seat for St. George's, Hanover Square, in Goschen's favour.

the seals of the Foreign Office from Lord Iddesleigh. In this season of excursions and alarums, Smith's elevation to the leadership was a surprise only second in importance to Churchill's *coup de théâtre*. One of the "old gang," well down the vale of years, staid, slow in speech and of benign appearance, he was of a type as different as can be conceived from his dashing predecessor: but his colleagues had learned to rely upon his staunchness, sound sense and businesslike habits, and for five years—till death removed him from the post—he never faltered or failed.

A third surprise—a tragical one—befell the party at this time. Lord Iddesleigh, better remembered as Sir Stafford Northcote, had felt keenly his removal from the leadership of the Commons at Churchill's instance; nevertheless, when Churchill's resignation threatened to upset the Government, Iddesleigh offered to resign his office in order that Salisbury might strengthen the Cabinet by the admission of a Liberal-Unionist. Salisbury accepted the offer, but, by misadventure, omitted to notify the fact to Iddesleigh, who received the first intimation through a newspaper. He was pressed to remain in the Cabinet as Lord President of the Council, but he declined. On 12th January he went to the Foreign Office, and, while waiting for an interview with the Prime Minister, was seized with heart failure and died within twenty minutes in the presence of Lord Salisbury and Mr. Henry Manners, his private secretary.[1] Iddesleigh was in his sixty-ninth year at his death. Representing an ancient Devonshire family, he was an example of the very best type of country gentleman. Scholarly without pedantry, as a public speaker he ranked far above the average, and must be accounted a bold and successful Chancellor of the Exchequer; but when Beaconsfield passed over Gathorne Hardy and set Northcote to lead the House of Commons, although the arrangement worked well enough while the Conservatives were in office, it broke down when they went into opposition, owing to Northcote's unwarlike disposition.

Death of Lord Iddesleigh, 12th Jan. 1887.

On 27th January 1887, began the longest session of

[1] Succeeded as 8th Duke of Rutland in 1906.

Parliament on record. In the previous autumn Parnell had introduced the Relief of Distress (Ireland) Bill, empowering the Land Court to reduce the judicial rents fixed under the Land Act of 1881, and suspending the power of evicting tenants who should pay half the judicial rent, with arrears. There had been a steady decline in agricultural prices since 1881, but in the opinion of the Cabinet that could not justify the parliamentary interference with the statutory adjustment which had so recently superseded free contract.[1] The bill, accordingly, was thrown out. The Parnellite leaders, in the absence of Parnell through illness, then devised and instituted what was known as the Plan of Campaign. Tenants were invited to meet and decide what rent they could and would pay for their holdings. In the event of a landlord refusing to receive the rent offered, it was paid into the hands of trustees as contribution to a fund for resisting evictions. As the judges pronounced this to amount to criminal conspiracy, proceedings were taken against some of the organisers of the plan. Nevertheless the situation was one extremely difficult to deal with; for, in a number of cases, to quote Sir James Caird (a member of Lord Cowper's Commission), "economic rent in Ireland had disappeared," owing to the fall in prices. Hundreds, probably thousands, of tenants in such circumstances received voluntary relief from their landlords. Nothing was heard about these; though the public was kept well informed about evictions on such estates as Lord Clanricarde's, where, although the rents were not unfair, the owner was an unpopular absentee. Sir Michael Hicks-Beach, as Chief Secretary, attempted the impossible, namely, to discriminate between harsh and considerate landlords, withholding police aid from the first and assisting the second where evictions were necessary. The attempt broke down, after being judicially condemned by Chief Baron Palles. Hicks-Beach resigned office on the score of ill-health in March, and Mr. Arthur Balfour succeeded him. His first duty was the ungrateful one of

The Plan of Campaign, Sept. 1886.

[1] Under the Act of 1881 judicial rents had been fixed for a term of fifteen years. Lord Cowper's Commission recommended that the term be reduced to five years, and that those already fixed should be revised.

bringing in a Coercion Bill, for the trial of Mr. Dillon, M.P. and others for enforcing the Plan of Campaign had failed through the jury disagreeing, and the new organisation was overriding the law of the land as the Land League and the National League had done before. The prevailing lawlessness was dwelt upon by the Irish assize judges in their charges. In Mayo Judge Lawson described the condition of things as "approaching as near to rebellion against the authority of the country as anything short of civil war could be." Close upon one thousand individuals were under special police protection in various parts of Ireland, throwing upon the ratepayers of these districts an extra annual charge of £55,000. The purpose of the plan of campaign was plainly disclosed to the people of East Galway by their member.

Criminal Law Amendment Act, 28th March 1887.

> "This is not a question," said he, "between small reductions of rent and large reductions. It is not a question of what a man is able to pay at present prices, and it is not a question of sympathy for good landlords or bad landlords. . . . The great, the mighty question is whether the lands of Ireland shall belong to the people of Ireland, or whether they shall belong to the enemies of the people. I am not going to put before you a no-rent manifesto, but we put a programme before you that will lead to that result—that will take first one slice, then take a second slice, and we will keep slicing at it till nothing remains!"

Above all, there was the invariable feature in periods of Irish disturbance, the impossibility of getting juries to return verdicts according to the evidence. Jurymen could only be faithful to their oath at the peril of their lives. Thus had the attempt to govern Ireland by ordinary law received seven months' trial and failed completely: there was nothing for it but recourse to extraordinary powers if social order was to be restored, so extraordinary powers were sought for and obtained; not without frequent "scenes" and prolonged sittings. The Criminal Law Amendment Act (Ireland) differed from all previous Coercion Acts, in that it was made permanent instead of for a limited term. *Habeas corpus* was not suspended, but the Lord-Lieutenant was empowered to proclaim any association which might be

considered dangerous or seditious. It was a milder enactment than the measure obtained at the instance of Gladstone's Cabinet in 1881, which enabled the Lord-Lieutenant to send any man to gaol without trial as a "suspect"; it was originally more severe than that measure in the provision for removing Irish prisoners to London for trial; but this part of the Bill was dropped before it left the House of Commons. The debates were remarkable in a respect significant of the altered relation of parties. Hitherto, and especially throughout the Parliament of 1880–85, the Government of the day could always count upon the support of the regular Opposition in obtaining such powers as they declared necessary for maintaining law and order in Ireland. No such support was to be had now. Nero, it is said, used to spend such of his leisure as was not devoted to more reprehensible recreation in gazing at his gardens through a large emerald. Even so Gladstone now saw everything through green Irish spectacles—Gladstone, who in 1881 had declared that the Nationalists were "marching through rapine to the dismemberment of the Empire," in 1887 pronounced boycotting to be one of "the only weapons of defence belonging to a poor and disheartened people." He passionately denounced the Government Bill, and led his party into the lobby against it with the Parnellites.

Concurrently with the Coercion Bill in the Commons, the Government introduced into the House of Lords an Irish Land Bill to give effect to the recommendation of the Cowper Commission as to judicial rents. In the previous autumn, as has been mentioned above, the Cabinet had recoiled from the proposal to meddle with judicial rents. Lord Salisbury, especially, had spoken with indiscreet vehemence against it—honest, no doubt, but indiscreet—as the result was to show; for the pressure from loyal Ulster became so great, the evidence of wide-spread inability of land in that and other districts to bear the rent fixed was so convincing, that Salisbury had to give way and send down to the House of Commons practically the same Bill which it had rejected at the hands of Parnell the year before.

Irish Land Act, 1887.

And what, it may be asked, was the part played by

Lord Randolph Churchill towards his old colleagues? The presence of a seceded minister is usually a source of disquiet and insecurity for the occupants of the Treasury Bench. There is first the inevitable personal explanation, and expectation ran high among those in Opposition who had so often been stung by Churchill's searching lash that Ministers would have an uneasy half-hour. They had to put up with disappointment. He rehearsed the points in finance on which he had failed to obtain the assent of his colleagues; he read some correspondence which had passed between himself and the Prime Minister; he permitted himself a few slightly sarcastic observations upon a Government in whose projects retrenchment had no place: and—he sat down. "Never mind," thought experienced members in the Opposition; "Randolph is not the man to take punishment lying down. Wait till the House warms to debate, and then we'll see."

Rumour was rife, rifer than ever when Hicks-Beach retired, of a Tory-Democrat conspiracy against the "old gang." Disappointed again! Throughout that session, and for the rest of his life, Churchill, though not sparing criticism upon specific points in the Government policy, never departed from his rôle as an independent supporter. Almost the only occasion during this session on which he showed some bitterness was when Chamberlain and Harcourt were arranging the Round Table conclave. He referred to the "extraordinary gyrations" of the member for Birmingham as "an erroneous and mistaken course," and declared that before he left the Government he had "regarded the Liberal-Unionists as a useful kind of crutch, and looked forward to the time, *and no distant time,* when the Tory party might walk alone. . . . It is to the Tory party, and solely to the Tory party, that I looked for the maintenance of the Union."

Certainly this was language calculated to endanger the young alliance, but personal friendship between Churchill and Chamberlain prevented serious offence being taken.

The Round Table Conference, referred to above, had its origin in a speech by Mr. Chamberlain in December 1886, in the course of which he asked his Birmingham con-

stituents why, seeing Liberal-Unionists agreed with Mr. Gladstone on every question except the Irish one, and on three out of every four points in that one, it should not be possible to agree upon a common policy by discussion at a round table. Gladstone warmly commended the proposal, and when on 13th January Chamberlain and Trevelyan as Liberal-Unionists met Harcourt and Morley as Gladstonian Liberals, with Lord Herschell as chairman, it seemed as if reunion between the Gladstonians and the Radicals were almost inevitable. At the first two meetings the points of difference were reduced to very few, chief among them being the question whether the police should be under control of a Dublin legislature or the Imperial Parliament. On 29th January Mr. Chamberlain addressed his constituents, and in discussing the question of reconciliation he incurred from the Gladstonians the charge of having violated the confidential character of the conference by specifying the points whereon agreement was most difficult.

The Round Table Conference, 13th Jan. 1887.

"I am not clever enough to define what people mean by a dependent executive. If it means that these legislative authorities—these subordinate authorities—should have a military or quasi-military force at their disposal, or that they should have the control and the administration of justice, then I say emphatically—No! I believe—I know—that such a proceeding would be entirely contrary to the precedent of the Canadian constitution [which he had indicated as the kind of federation to which he would consent], and I believe it would be dangerous to the security of the United Kingdom. . . . What is really important (and I beg of you to dwell upon this idea), is that the Imperial Parliament should be able, in case its interference becomes necessary in order to prevent abuse, to count upon some authority, some force—*not* the military force—in order to carry out its decrees. . . . It is a cardinal point that the Imperial Government should have always at its disposal, in case of need, some civil force which will enable it to execute its own decrees, to secure itself against abuse, to maintain the statutory provisions which it may impose, and to secure respect to the decrees of any court which may have to decide upon such questions."

This language, as well as certain expressions contained in an article contributed by Chamberlain to the *Baptist* periodical, were considered "as inconsistent with conciliatory

negotiations in private,"[1] and the conference was abandoned. The only important result of it was to strengthen the allied forces of Conservatives and Liberal-Unionists, for Chamberlain commanded a compact little contingent of Radical-Unionists from Birmingham. True, the conference effected the detachment of Sir George Trevelyan from the Unionist party. He had lost his seat for Hawick Burghs as a Unionist; he now found one in Glasgow as a Home Ruler, and never thereafter wavered in his allegiance to Gladstone.[2]

The new Coercion Act roused the Parnellite members to the utmost measure and methods of obstruction. No one who took part in the labours of the session of 1887 is likely to forget them. To cope with obstruction it became necessary to stiffen the rules of debate, which had already been greatly modified by the adoption of the closure. The frequency with which subsequent modifications have been made, all in the direction of curtailing excessive loquacity, may have caused intelligent spectators to liken the House of Commons to a set of school children who, instead of making the best use of their play-time, waste it in disputing about the rules of the game. On this occasion the alteration wrung by the Government from a reluctant House was that known as "the guillotine"—a rule which enabled the majority to fix a time for closing the Committee stage of any Bill, after which all the remaining clauses are voted upon without discussion. A grave step, this, marking a change in the self-respect and honourable understanding which, despite occasional angry outbreaks, had hitherto caused the rules of procedure to be observed rather as guide-posts in debate than as a threat to transgressors; but it cannot be held that circumstances had not rendered it necessary.

The Guillotine resolution, 10th June 1887.

[1] Morley's *Gladstone*, iii. 368. Lord Morley was one of the four plenipotentiaries composing the conference.

[2] Trevelyan's defection from the Unionist party makes the failure of the conference very remarkable. Here were five men (including the chairman, Lord Herschell), of whom four were prepared to go all lengths in satisfying Parnellite demands. The fifth, while ready to grant four-fifths of that demand, was so resolute in refusing the fifth part as not only to break up the conference, but to carry with him the Radical-Unionists. So far as I can remember, only two Liberal-Unionists followed Trevelyan in rejoining the Gladstonian Liberals at that time, namely Mr. Caldwell, one of the Glasgow members, and Mr. Buchanan, one of the Edinburgh members.

Many changes had passed upon Great Britain since the cardinal change brought about by the Reform Act of 1832; none, perhaps, more extensive than that which had affected the daily newspapers. In volume, in ability of writing, and in enterprise, many rivals to the London journals had appeared in the provinces. Still the *Times* maintained a position unique in the journalism of the world; what appeared in its columns carried an authority wielded by no other daily paper. Consequently, when the managers of the *Times* began publishing a series of papers entitled "Parnellism and Crime," they greatly strengthened both the belief of those who considered that the Irish leaders had tacitly assented to those deeds of violence which they had never done anything to discourage, far less condemn,[1] and the indignation of the Gladstonian Liberals who had allied themselves with the Parnellites. The climax of the indictment appeared in the *Times* of 18th April, the day when the Coercion Bill was down for second reading, when there was given in facsimile a letter purporting to be written by Parnell in 1882 to some members of the Land League. It was dated nine days after the Phœnix Park murders, and consisted of an excuse for his having denounced the crime, which "was the only course open to us. To do that promptly was plainly our best policy." The writer, while expressing regret for Lord F. Cavendish's death, added, "I cannot refuse to admit that Burke got no more than his deserts." The effect of this terrible document was instantaneous. It seemed hardly possible that the *Times* would publish such a letter without the fullest assurance that it was genuine—without taking every possible precaution against forgery.

"Parnellism and Crime," 1887.

Late on that same evening—nay, it was in the small hours of the following morning—Parnell rose just before the division was taken on the second reading. Tense with expectation, the House awaited in profound silence his opening sentences. He declared that the alleged letter was a barefaced forgery, and that he would willingly have

[1] Except the letter written by Parnell after the Phœnix Park murders.

placed his own body between Lord Frederick Cavendish and the assassin's knife. Cries of "Burke, Burke!" from the ministerial benches. Parnell paused, hesitating; then said he would have done the same for Mr. Burke. His repudiation of the letter was received with incredulity by the Unionists, with relief by the Gladstonian Liberals. The *Times* refused to retract; Parnell, acting on the advice of Mr. Morley and two other members of the House of Commons, declined the offer made by the Government to defray the cost of a libel action against that journal. "The issues," observes Lord Morley in his account of the transaction, "were too great to be exposed to the hazards of the cast of a die"[1] (that is, to the verdict of a Middlesex jury), and he goes on to argue that, were the venue to be laid in Ireland, where a verdict favourable to the Irish leader might be expected, the moral effect upon English opinion would be worthless. To admit the soundness of this line of reasoning would be to condemn British jurisprudence as a system corrupt and unjust.

One of Parnell's friends, Mr. F. H. O'Donnell,[2] having been named in some of the *Times* articles, did bring an action against the proprietor on his own account. It was unsuccessful; but the Attorney-General, as counsel for the *Times*, having produced a number of fresh letters incriminating the Irish party, Parnell threw over the advice of his English friends, and demanded that the question of the authenticity of these letters should be submitted to a select committee of the House of Commons. The Government refused the demand—they did right in so doing; for what tribunal could be less qualified to deal with delicate and complex questions affecting the good fame of a political party, than a committee composed, as such committees invariably are, of members daily engaged in the fierce game of Government and Opposition? No: the Government could not refer the question of the letters to a committee of the House; but they would refer that question, together with all the other accusations by the *Times*, to a statutory com-

The Parnell Commission, 17th Sept. 1888–22nd Nov. 1889.

[1] Morley's *Gladstone*, iii. 393, 394.
[2] M.P. for Galway, afterwards for Dungarvan, 1874–85.

mission of three judges.[1] The Charges and Allegations Bill passed first and second reading without a division; but there occurred some fiery passages of arms in committee, and the final stages were accomplished in August only by means of closure by guillotine.

The judges appointed were Sir James Hannen, Mr. Justice A. L. Smith, and Mr. Justice Day.[2] They got to work on 22nd October, which marked the beginning of one of the most remarkable State trials in history; sixty-five Irish members, and Michael Davitt, founder of the National League, being called upon to defend themselves against the charges contained in the *Times* articles. The Attorney-General, Sir Richard Webster,[3] as counsel for the *Times*, was first directed to submit the evidence whereon these charges were based. Hundreds of witnesses were examined before the adjournment for Christmas on 14th December; after the Court reassembled on 15th January, three weeks were spent in reciting speeches delivered by the Irish members during the agitation, which, it was argued, established the fact of their connivance with crime. The proceedings became more exciting when an Englishman was put in the box, who had exchanged his name of Beach for that of Major Henri le Caron, in order to act as a spy upon the Fenians, into whose innermost councils he was admitted. But the climax was reached on 21st February after the authenticity of the incriminating letters had come under consideration of the judges. Then was made known to a bewildered Court and public the amazing

[1] "For the first time in England," writes Lord Morley, "since the Great Rebellion, men were practically put upon their trial on a political charge, without giving them the protection of a jury" (*Gladstone*, iii. 401). Aye, in England, perhaps; but Gladstone's Coercion Act of 1882 had provided a precisely similar tribunal, viz., three judges without a jury, for trial of persons in Ireland charged with treason, murder and other grave crimes.

[2] It is seldom that exception can be taken to my friend Mr. Herbert Paul's scrupulous fairness as a historian. As a Radical, he keeps his prepossession under better governance than any other modern writer on politics known to me. It is the more to be regretted, therefore, that he should have passed reflections upon the impartiality of these three judges based on the fact, first, that one was a Liberal-Unionist and the other two were Conservatives; and, second, that they were Englishmen! If the trained minds of English judges are incapable of impartiality, where shall that quality be sought for? This is a matter wholly apart from the constitutional propriety of the Commission, with which Mr. Paul mixes it up (*Modern England*, v. 160–162).

[3] Created Lord Alverstone in 1900 as Master of the Rolls, and appointed Lord Chief Justice in the same year.

F. Hollyer, Photo.

Robert Cecil, Marquess of Salisbury, K.G.
From the painting by G. F. Watts, R.A.

LONDON: EDWARD ARNOLD.

fact that Mr. Macdonald, manager of the *Times*, had taken no precautions whatever against imposition. He had received these letters in three batches from the Secretary of the Irish Loyal and Patriotic Union, who, in turn, had been supplied with them by a needy, disreputable journalist named Richard Pigott, whom he had subsidised liberally to procure evidence of the connection between the Irish Parliamentary party and crime. Two thousand five hundred pounds had the ingenuous Macdonald paid for these precious documents, which, as he had told the Court, he felt were the sort of letters that Parnell was likely to have written! That was all he had had to go on, and he actually was content to publish his terrific indictment upon no firmer foundation. Macdonald's credulity met with the punishment it deserved, for it brought ruin upon the case of the *Times*. Before the first sitting of the Court to hear evidence on 22nd October, the wretch Pigott went to Parnell's solicitor, Mr. Lewis,[1] and confessed to having forged all the letters except the one published on 18th April 1886. He withdrew his confession next day; but all through the lengthy proceedings of the following months, while counsel for the *Times* were piling up evidence against the Irish members, the leading counsel for the defence[2] was biding his time till he could cross-examine Pigott. The time came on 21st February, when Russell produced certain letters written by Pigott to Archbishop Walsh, warning him that damning evidence of the complicity of Parnell and the Parnellites with crime was on the point of being made public; that it was in his (Pigott's) power to prevent this, thereby saving the Irish party from ruin; and that he was ready to do so—if it were made worth his while. Pigott, in fact, had been trying to find out which would pay him best—to forge letters for sale to the *Times* or to receive money from the archbishop for not forging them. Archbishop Walsh was not the

[1] Knighted in 1893; created a baronet in 1902.

[2] Sir Charles Russell was appointed Lord Chief Justice in 1894, and was afterwards Lord of Appeal, with the title of Lord Russell of Killowen. Gladstone would have had him as Lord Chancellor and Lord Ripon as Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland, had they not both belonged to the Church of Rome. When he introduced a bill to remove the disability applying to these offices, it was called the Bill of the Three R's—the Ripon and Russell Relief Bill.

man to walk into that kind of trap: he had told Pigott that it was "well that all such evidence as you refer to should be brought out into the light of day." Confronted with his own letters to the archbishop, Pigott utterly broke down. This was on Friday, 22nd February. On Saturday, 23rd, Pigott made abject confession of his forgeries in the presence of Parnell, to Mr. Labouchere, M.P. When the Court reassembled on Tuesday, 26th, Russell was ready to continue Pigott's cross-examination. There was no need to do so. Counsel for the *Times* withdrew the letters; at Russell's instance a warrant was issued for the apprehension of Pigott on charges of perjury and forgery; the police ran him down in Madrid on 1st March, but before they could lay hands upon him he had ended his unclean existence by blowing out his brains.

Pigott's flight and suicide, 1st March 1889.

With the collapse of this part of the case, public interest in the trial waned. The Gladstonian Liberals accepted the episode as a complete acquittal of the Parnellite members; the Eighty Club entertained Lord Spencer and Parnell as their guests at dinner on 8th March; and on 23rd April the Town Council of Edinburgh resolved by 24 votes to 13 to admit Parnell to the freedom of the city, which was done on 20th July 1889, the Lord Provost declining to be present at the ceremony. Gladstone did not share the Lord Provost's scruples. Accepting the exposure of the forgeries as tantamount to the complete acquittal of the Irish members from complicity with outrage, he invited Parnell to Hawarden in December, where he discussed with him the lines of a future Home Rule Bill.

The Commission reported to the Crown on 13th February 1890, and whereas the report has been frequently referred to and cited in support of the respective prepossessions of different writers and speakers, the finding of the judges may be given here as it stood at the close of the lengthy document.

Report of the Parnell Commission, 13th Feb. 1890.

I. We find that the respondent members of Parliament collectively were not members of a conspiracy having for its object to establish the absolute independence of Ireland; but we find

that some of them, together with Mr. Davitt, established and joined in the Land League organisation with the intention, by its means, to bring about the absolute independence of Ireland as a separate nation. [Here follow the names of the members indicated.]

II. We find that the respondents did enter into a conspiracy, by a system of coercion and intimidation, to promote an agrarian agitation against the payment of agricultural rents, for the purpose of impoverishing and expelling from the country the Irish landlords, who were styled "the English garrison."

III. We find that the charge that "when on certain occasions they thought it politic to denounce, and did denounce, certain crimes in public, they afterwards led their supporters to believe such denunciations were not sincere," is not established. We entirely acquit Mr. Parnell and the other respondents of the charge of insincerity in their denunciation of the Phœnix Park murders, and find that the facsimile letter on which this charge was chiefly based, as against Mr. Parnell, is a forgery.

IV. We find that the respondents did disseminate the *Irish World* and other newspapers tending to incite to sedition and the commission of other crime.

V. We find that the respondents did not directly incite persons to the commission of crime other than intimidation, but that they did incite to intimidation, and that the consequences of that incitement was that crime and outrage were committed by the persons incited. We find that it has not been proved that the respondents made payments for the purpose of inciting persons to commit crime.

VI. We find as to the allegation that the respondents did nothing to prevent crime and expressed no *bonâ fide* disapproval, that some of the respondents, and in particular Mr. Davitt, did express *bonâ fide* disapproval of crime and outrage; but that the respondents did not denounce the system of intimidation which led to crime and outrage, but persisted in it with knowledge of its effect.

VII. We find that the respondents did defend persons charged with agrarian crime, and supported their families; but that it has not been proved that they subscribed to testimonials for, or were intimately associated with, notorious criminals, or that they made payments to procure the escape of criminals from justice.

VIII. We find, as to the allegation that the respondents made payments to compensate persons who had been injured in the commission of crime, that they did make such payments.

IX. As to the allegation that the respondents invited the assistance and co-operation of, and accepted subscriptions of money from, known advocates of crime and the use of dynamite, we find that the respondents did invite the assistance and co-operation of, and accepted subscriptions of money from, Patrick Ford, a known advocate of crime and the use of dynamite, but that it has not been proved that the respondents, or any of them, knew that the

Clan-na-Gael controlled the League or was collecting money for the parliamentary fund. It has been proved that the respondents invited and obtained the assistance and co-operation of the Physical Force party in America, including the Clan-na-Gael, and, in order to obtain that assistance, abstained from repudiating or condemning the action of that party.

The complete breakdown of that portion of the allegations by the *Times* which was based on the forged letters outweighed in the public judgment all the rest of the charges, and there can be no doubt that the Government suffered compromise through its principal law officer being engaged as counsel for the *Times*, which gave to the proceedings the appearance of a State prosecution, instead of what they actually were—an inquiry appointed by Parliament at the instance of Parnell.[1] In these circumstances the inevitable, but undesirable, consequence was that opinion ranged itself upon the lines of political parties, whence, even at this distance of time, it is difficult to extricate it. This much, however, stands as indisputable that, of the nine counts into which the allegations by the *Times* were ranged, the respondents were acquitted only upon No. iii. —that founded upon the forged letters. The charges in Nos. ii., iv., viii. and ix. were found to be true; those in Nos. i., v., vi. and vii. were found partially proven.

The proprietor of the *Times* paid heavy penalty for the blundering credulity of the manager, Macdonald (who died before the Commissioners delivered their report). Besides the enormous cost of the inquiry, he met an action for libel brought against him by Parnell in 1890, by agreeing to pay £5000 damages.

To follow this painful narrative to its issue has carried us far beyond the starting-point in 1887, to which year a return must now be made to take note of a national event in agreeable contrast to the heat and rancour of proceed-

[1] Hitherto the law officers of the Crown had been free to engage in private litigation; but the inconvenience, to use no stronger term, of the practice had long been complained of, and the proceedings before the Parnell Commission did much to bring about the change effected somewhat later, whereby the law officers are debarred from being parties to any case in which the Crown (*i.e.* the State) is not a litigant. The Attorney-General's salary is £7000 a year, and he receives fees in addition to the amount of about £6000 a year. The Solicitor-General's salary is £6000 a year, with about £4000 a year in fees.

ings within the walls of Parliament. The 20th of June was the fiftieth anniversary of Queen Victoria's accession, and her subjects prepared to celebrate the jubilee with heart-whole enthusiasm. Ever since her widowhood in 1861, the Queen had led a far more secluded life than is customarily allowed to crowned heads; but the impatient resentment which had been felt by the public at one time, and freely expressed, had been entirely dissipated, first, by the knowledge that although her Majesty avoided festivities and State ceremonials as much as possible, she never for a single day relaxed her attention to public business; and second, by the growing popularity of the Prince and Princess of Wales, who, the one by his perfect tact and amiability, the other by her beauty and charm, and both by their ready sympathy and active co-operation with all philanthropic projects and schemes for social amelioration, had done more to render monarchy a popular institution than could have been deemed possible fifty years before.

Queen Victoria's Jubilee, 20th June 1887.

It so happened that, comparatively few as had been the Queen's appearances in public for five-and-twenty years, they had generally been favoured with blue skies and sunshine, so that "Queen's weather" had become almost proverbial. The summer of 1887 proved no exception to this rule. London lay for weeks under a cloudless sky, and no day in the whole year was more perfect than Jubilee Day, 21st June. On that morning her Majesty set out in procession from Buckingham Palace to attend a thanksgiving service at Westminster Abbey, accompanied by a number of European monarchs, Indian princes and other dignitaries—a brilliant spectacle in the summer sunshine.

Meanwhile another gathering had assembled in April, heralded by no flare of trumpet or peal of organ, distinguished by no blaze of scarlet or flash of jewels. In the rearrangement of departments following upon Churchill's resignation in December 1886, the Right Hon. Edward Stanhope[1] had been transferred from the Colonial Office to the War Office; but before the change took place he had made arrangement,

The First Colonial Conference, 1887.

[1] Died in 1893.

in furtherance of his favourite scheme of imperial federation, for a Conference of delegates from all the self-governing colonies to be held in London in jubilee year. Sir Henry Holland[1] succeeded Stanhope as Colonial Secretary, and presided over the deliberations of the Conference. Regarded as a recognition, too long delayed, of the great colonies as integral, yet vulnerable, members of Empire, this first Colonial Conference was a timely and statesmanlike act, albeit one should not appraise too scrupulously the immediate practical result. A more imperious will—a clearer cut purpose—than either Salisbury's or Holland's was needed to strengthen the ancient foundation of sentiment with the cement of common interest; but for that will and purpose the empire was to wait for some years yet. Indeed Salisbury's opening speech to the Conference was somewhat of a frost. Federation he dismissed as "an ambitious scheme of constitution-making—nebulous matter which, in the course of ages, would settle down into material and practical results." Fair trade and colonial preference, in advocacy of which the National Conservative Union had carried enthusiastic resolutions year after year, he would not even discuss. The only definite proposal he supported was one for more effective imperial defence, and all that can be claimed as a substantial outcome of the Conference was an undertaking by the Queen's Government to provide more cruisers for the protection of Australasian commerce, and another by the Australian delegates to pay for their maintenance. But fine weather, splendid festivities and general exhilaration prevented the Colonial statesmen feeling or at least expressing disappointment with the tangible results; and, at all events, a fertile precedent had been set, whereof the ultimate effect is not yet apparent. Our great colonies, grown to the dimensions of nations, have offered—in some important instances have bestowed—preferential terms of trading to the mother country. As yet the imperial Government have accepted their favours without making the slightest reciprocal return. Many minds are anxiously speculating how long an Empire can stand intact under a commercial

The Colonial Conference, 1887.

[1] Created Baron Knutsford, 1888; Viscount, 1895.

system which binds the mother country to offer no advantage to her own children over foreigners—white, black, brown or yellow—and allows those children to fence their markets with protective tariffs against her own produce and manufactures.

The bonds of consanguinity and a common religion and literature are strong, but they are not impregnable; the sentiment of nationality is ardent, but it is not imperishable; and the world hereafter will judge harshly the statesmanship that shall allow them to be strained till they fall asunder.

CHAPTER IX

Local Government Act—Impaired prestige of the Ministry—Fall of Parnell—His death—Irish Land Purchase Act—Death of W. H. Smith—And of Charles Bradlaugh—Free education—Death of the Duke of Clarence—Dissolution of Parliament—Mr. Gladstone's fourth administration—The second Home Rule Bill—Loss of H.M.S. *Victoria*—Retirement of Mr. Gladstone—Lord Rosebery becomes Prime Minister—The Death Duties—Defeat and resignation of Ministers—Death of Lord Randolph Churchill.

THE session of 1888 is memorable on account of the sweeping change, for which reform is hardly an accurate definition, effected by Mr. Ritchie's Local Government Act in the administration of county business. The term "reform" has come to imply the existence of abuse or corruption in one form or another. No such accusation was brought, or could justly be brought, against the persons who, *ex officio*, had charge of affairs throughout the provinces. In England and Wales these persons were magistrates, nominated by the Lords-Lieutenant and appointed by the Lord Chancellor, constituting the body known as Quarter Sessions with both judicial and administrative powers. In Scotland, administration, without judicial powers, was vested in landed proprietors in right of their possession.[1] In both countries the duties had been efficiently and economically discharged; but the system savoured too strongly of feudalism to be consistent with a democratic monarchy. It was argued, not without reason, that a people which had been pronounced capable of managing the affairs of an empire might safely be entrusted with control of those of a county. Ritchie,[2] taking the change in hand,

Local Government Act, 1888.

[1] The qualification, as settled by the Valuation Act of 1854, was ownership of land within the county of £100 of yearly value, being heir-apparent to land of the annual value of £400, or being factor (agent) to any proprietor of land to the annual value of £800. The road trusts were partly elected by the ratepayers.

[2] Created Lord Ritchie of Dundee in 1905; died 1906.

did well to make it a genuine one, though his propositions scandalised the older Tories and stirred some qualms in the broad mind of the Prime Minister himself. Quarter Sessions were retained, but only as a court of justice and appeal; the great towns, including London, were constituted counties each in itself; only the venerable Corporation of the City of London survived unaffected by the change. Everywhere else, popular election was substituted for prescriptive right or nomination.

The experience of twenty and odd years has justified the authors of the new system. As a rule, the persons most capable of managing the affairs of their neighbours are elected; and the fittest of the old governing class in rural districts are seldom disappointed if they entertain any ambition to serve. In the counties of cities, it is true, the elections have a tendency to run upon party lines, especially in London, where the area of administration extends to 121 square miles.[1]

The measure was not extended to Ireland. The Unionist party were pledged—deeply pledged—to deal with that country in all respects on equal terms with the rest of the United Kingdom; and in 1886 Lord Randolph Churchill had gone further, and, as leader of the House of Commons, had committed his colleagues to "simultaneity," as well as "similarity" of treatment. But the Government, while acknowledging the obligation to confer local government upon Irish counties, claimed freedom to do so at a suitable time. They were advised by the Irish executive that the condition of the country was not then such as to make it expedient to undertake the change; consequently, a bill brought in by the Irish party and supported by Mr. Gladstone, was opposed by the Government. This roused the ire of Churchill. Hitherto he had behaved towards his old colleagues with a forbearance rarely shown by a seceding Minister, supporting them with both speech and vote; but now he ranged himself with their enemies, bitterly reproaching them with breach of faith, and claiming that

[1] The London County Council consists of a chairman, 19 aldermen and 118 councillors; it administers an annual income of about £15,000,000 sterling, and has a gross debt of about £82,000,000.

they were bound by the words which he had spoken in their name at the table of the House.

"The time has gone by altogether for me to bear, and I will be content no longer to bear, solely the responsibility for these words. I do not think there would be a *bonâ fide* carrying out of the policy I then announced if Ireland is not to have a measure of local government until the state of order in that country is satisfactory to the executive Government."

In truth the Government had allowed itself to be led into a difficult predicament. Churchill's words in 1886 represented the unanimous desire and purpose of the Unionist party in general and the Cabinet in particular but Lord Salisbury ought to have been sufficiently on the alert not to allow himself to be fettered by the rash utterance of his impetuous Chancellor of the Exchequer. "A word spoken in season, how good is it!" Had the Prime Minister tempered Churchill's pledge to "simultaneity" with the reasonable condition that the social condition of the Irish community should be similar to that of England and Scotland, it would have been difficult for the most thorough-going Radical to have made out a case for "simultaneity" at a time when boycotting, with all its elaborate cruelty, was in full swing, and the Plan of Campaign was coercing tenants to repudiate their just obligations. But the word was not spoken, and the good faith of the Government received a slur which might easily have been avoided. The difficulty of securing the representation of minorities proved so great an obstacle to devising a fair system of local government for Ireland, that the intention of the Unionist Government was not carried into effect until 1898, the Liberals having been in office meanwhile from 1892 to 1895.

Impaired prestige of the Ministry, 1890.

In 1890 Lord Randolph Churchill dealt the Ministry a wound which, whether he intended it or not, was well-nigh fatal to them. They had been seriously compromised by the result of the Parnell Commission and the break-down of the gravest article in the indictment of the respondents by the *Times*. It was vain to argue that the State had not been made the prosecutor; that the Commission had been

appointed at the instance of Parnell himself, and that the Liberal Opposition had acquiesced in the transaction by not dividing against the Bill which created it. Enough for the public that the Attorney-General had acted as leading counsel for the *Times*.

The report of the Commission came before the House of Commons on 3rd March 1890; the debate had run nearly four days before Churchill made any sign. He had supported the Government in 1888 when they refused Parnell's demand for a Select Committee; he had remonstrated against the appointment of the Commission in a temperate, forcible, well-reasoned memorandum addressed to Mr. W. H. Smith as leader of the House,[1] since which he had maintained silence on the subject. That silence he now determined to break. He drew up an amendment, calling upon the House "to record its condemnation of those who are responsible for the accusations of murder," &c., which he requested Mr. Louis Jennings[2] to put on the paper in his (Jennings') name, and undertook to speak in support of it. When the time came, however, much to Jennings' displeasure, he threw over his friend and spoke instead on the main question. It was a painfully memorable scene.

Not a cheer from his own party greeted the lost leader when he rose; not a trace was there in the speaker of the sparkling sally and reckless levity with which the chief of the Fourth Party was wont to season invective. Point by point he discussed and condemned the conduct of the Government in appointing the Commission; then suddenly, as if maddened by the strained silence in which the Unionists sat listening, he raised his voice to a shout and, seeming to lose control over his utterance, charged Ministers with having "outraged and violated constitutional liberty," hurling at them a phrase which, punctuated as it was by a menacing finger pointed at the occupants of the Treasury bench each time he reiterated the name of

[1] The memorandum is printed at length in Mr. Winston Churchill's life of his father, vol. ii. pp. 408–11.

[2] Journalist and author; edited *The Croker Papers*. M.P. for Stockport and, at this time, the faithful confidant of Churchill, whose desertion of the amendment in question caused a permanent quarrel between them. Jennings died in 1893.

"Pigott, Pigott, Pigott!" I do not choose to sully this page by repeating.

"Si vis me flere, dolendum est
Primum ipsi tibi: tunc tua me infortunia lædent."

Down to this time there had remained among Unionists a strong and deep current of sympathy for their lost leader, and a confident expectation of his return sooner or later. But it is not too much to say, that by this single speech, with all its vindictive personality and ruthless exposure of error, that sympathy was diverted and that expectation extinguished. The scene takes rank among the most melancholy of parliamentary memories—that lonely figure, still retaining much of the grace of youth, spurning the homage which most of his own party were still ready to yield him, cut off from the other party by invincible hostility to Home Rule, wasting in wilful isolation superb gifts fitting him for the highest service to the State. It needs no charity now to recognise in Churchill's loss of control on this occasion the forerunner of that malady which was so soon to bring his brilliant course to a close.

Churchill's attack added to the strength of that current in public opinion against which Ministers had to contend throughout the summer of 1890. By-elections went against them with more than usual perversity; they were only saved from defeat in the Commons by a majority of four on their Local Taxation Bill (17th June), and when Parliament adjourned on 12th August the Opposition went off for a holiday, highly exhilarated by the prospect of bringing the Government to its knees in the new session which was to begin in the autumn for which the Irish Land Bill and the Tithes Bill had been held over. But before the House met again, the aspect of the political heavens had undergone a parlous change.

Fall of Parnell, 1890.

Early in the year a petition for divorce had been filed by Captain O'Shea, with Parnell as co-respondent. O'Shea had been the chief go-between in negotiating the Kilmainham treaty; he was elected member for Galway on Parnell's nomination in 1885, greatly to the disgust of the party of action, who vented their ill-will

against having a Whig thrust upon them by spreading the scandal that "the membership for Galway was only Parnell's hush-money to the husband of his mistress."[1] Since then, sinister rumours had been fitfully current about Parnell's attentions to O'Shea's handsome wife. But if anybody had attention to spare from the proceedings of the Parnell Commission and noticed the petition of O'Shea *v.* O'Shea and Parnell on the defended list, he probably assumed that the Irish leader would come out of that case as triumphantly as he had been exonerated from authorship of the forged letters. Anyhow it took the world completely by surprise when the case was called on 17th November and the co-respondent allowed judgment to go against him without putting in any defence. He was not even represented by counsel, and a decree *nisi* was pronounced in his absence, with costs against the co-respondent.

The ultimate consequences to Parnell, and to the party he had led for sixteen years with unswerving authority, were such as could have happened in no other European country, for in none other does private misconduct of this kind so fatally affect the influence and career of a statesman as it does in Great Britain.

The Irish party, indeed, at once rallied to their chief. On 18th November, the day after judgment had been pronounced against Parnell, the National League, presided over by Mr. John Redmond, passed a resolution of unabated confidence in their chief, which was ratified two days later by a mass meeting in the Leinster Hall, with cordial assent from Messrs. Healy, M'Carthy, O'Brien, and John Dillon. The Irish parliamentary party were as unanimous in voice and sentiment as they seldom had been before and never have been since.[2]

Immediately after these manifestations came the annual meeting of the Liberal Federation at Sheffield, where the "Nonconformist conscience," if its voice was small and still (for the divorce case was never mentioned in the

[1] O'Donnell's *Irish Parliamentary Party*, ii. 169.

[2] Mr. M'Carthy retired from Parliament in 1900; Mr. Healy lost his seat in the general election of December 1910; Messrs. O'Brien and Dillon remain in Parliament (1911), but unanimity is conspicuously, vociferously absent from their relations.

public conference), made itself so plainly felt that Sir William Harcourt and Mr. Morley were compelled to warn Mr. Gladstone that he must not throw his ægis over the delinquent. Gladstone's attitude was a singular one. Parnell had been his honoured guest at Hawarden in the previous autumn, when they had concerted details of the next Home Rule Bill. Deeply religious though Gladstone was known to be, and accustomed as he was to appeal in his public utterances to the moral sense of his audience, he had no word of guidance to offer his party at this crisis. "I feel," he wrote to Mr. Morley, who asked for advice *before* taking part in the Sheffield conference—"I feel . . . that we, the Liberal party as a whole, and especially we its leaders, have for the moment nothing to say to it—that we must be passive—must wait and watch. It is yet to be seen what our Nonconformist friends will say."[1] That was on the 19th November. *After* the Sheffield conference it was abundantly clear, through the press and in other ways, how the English and Scottish constituencies viewed Parnell's position, and this gave Gladstone his cue. He wrote to Mr. Morley on the 24th, desiring him to communicate to Parnell "the conclusion at which, after using all the means of observation and reflection in my power, I have myself arrived"—namely, that his "continuance at the present moment in the leadership would be productive of consequences disastrous in the highest degree to the cause of Ireland," and "would render my retention of the leadership of the Liberal party, based as it has been mainly upon the prosecution of the Irish cause, almost a nullity." Gladstone also reminded Parnell, through Mr. M'Carthy, of his offer to resign his seat after the Phœnix Park murders; but this hint at a solution Parnell treated with contemptuous silence.[2]

Parliament was to meet next day, the 25th, at three o'clock. Parnell called his party together at two for the usual preliminary confabulation, and he was re-elected chairman, only two of the eighty members withdrawing their support from their leader upon the ground of morality. Mr. Morley had not been able to communicate Gladstone's letter

[1] Morley's *Gladstone*, iii. 431. [2] Ibid., 444.

to Parnell before this meeting, so of course none in the room were aware of the decision of the Liberal leader.

That evening Gladstone's letter to Mr. Morley appeared in the newspapers, and was answered on the 29th by a manifesto from Parnell violently denouncing his Liberal accusers as "wirepullers," and "wolves." The Irish Roman Catholic bishops followed on 3rd December, admonishing the faithful to have no confidence in one who had been guilty "of the gravest offences known to religion and society." The next act took place in Committee Room 15, to which it has given a permanent place in history. Pale, haughty and austere, Parnell took his place in the chair of that party, which consisted mainly of his own creatures,[1] well knowing that the majority were bent upon his deposition. Day after day the sitting was renewed, Parnell fighting desperately, his back to the wall, torrents of speech flowing tumultuously round him amid growing confusion which he could not control, an he would. At last, on the twelfth day, uprose Mr. Justin M'Carthy, one of the few Irish members whose reputation rested upon something more solid than perfervid rhetoric, and called upon those who were weary of the unseemly strife to put an end to it by withdrawing. Forty-four members followed him from the room, leaving six-and-twenty stalwarts who refused to desert their leader.

The rupture of the Irish party, hitherto the most homogeneous in the House, was complete, and received emphasis a few days later by a contest between a Parnellite and an Anti-Parnellite for a vacancy in Kilkenny. The Anti-Parnellite was returned, much to Gladstone's relief. "It is a great gain," he wrote to Mr. Morley, adding the somewhat unphilosophic reflection—"yet sad enough to think that even here one-third of the voters should be either rogues or fools."[2]

Parnell did not long survive this mortal strife; long enough, however, to outlive the statutory six months covered by the decree *nisi*, at the end of which he married Mrs.

[1] "Starveling patriots, who had been picked out of nothing, who had been fed and clothed by the moneys of the League." (O'Donnell's *Irish Parliamentary Party*, ii. 298.)

[2] Morley's *Gladstone*, iii. 457.

O'Shea, on 25th June 1891. His appearance now was haggard; his health evidently was shattered, but he never rested from the strife, rushing continually to and fro Ireland and Brighton. He made his last speech in county Galway on 27th September, returning to Brighton only to die of lung trouble on 6th October.

Death of Parnell, 6th Oct. 1891.

The wreck of the Irish Nationalist party, with the collateral confusion suffered by the Gladstonian Liberals, may be held to have saved the Government in 1890. At all events it cleared their path of dangers multiple and grave. Lord Randolph Churchill was making holiday on sunny shores; but he kept an eye on the exciting course events were taking at home. "This government," he wrote to his wife, "will be fools if they do not dissolve. This crash of the Home Rule Party—this repudiation by Parnell of Mr. G.'s scheme,[1] is the most complete aud glaring justification of the Unionist cause. They will never get a better chance."

And no doubt, as upon a mere question of tactics, Churchill was right. The double scandal of the divorce case and the break-up of the Irish party had brought Home Rule into such deep discredit that the Unionists would have been sure of a sweeping victory at the polls. It is difficult to imagine Disraeli allowing such an occasion to slip. But Lord Salisbury took a more serious view of the responsibility of government. The day, let us hope, is not far distant when the public may be admitted to peruse his correspondence with the Queen and his colleagues at this period, and to learn what were the considerations which outweighed in his judgment the policy of snatching certain victory over a disorganised foe. One of these considerations must surely have been the beneficent work which the Chief Secretary, Mr. Balfour ("Bloody Balfour" was the *nom-de-*

[1] In his manifesto to the Irish people Parnell revealed the conditions upon which, during his visit at Hawarden, Gladstone had agreed to proceed with Home Rule. The Irish members at Westminster were to be reduced from 103 to 32; the Irish Parliament were to be debarred from land legislation and the constabulary were to remain under Imperial control. It is proper to add that Gladstone emphatically denied the accuracy of this statement.

guerre the author of the Crimes Act had earned from the Nationalist members) was carrying out in Ireland. His Land Purchase Bill was not passed until the following year, although it received an easy second reading while the Irish members were rending their own party asunder in Committee Room 15. This measure went far beyond the Ashbourne Act of 1885, for it provided for tenants receiving the advance of the whole purchase-money for their holdings, to be repaid in forty-nine years at the rate of 4 per cent. per annum, after which the tenant would become the freeholder. The total amount of the advance was limited to 30 millions sterling. It would be idle to deny that the majority of the Unionist party—the Conservative part thereof, at least—viewed with grave misgiving, even with dissatisfaction, this pledging of British credit for the benefit of a people who, through their representatives, never ceased to revile British rule. Moreover, the avowed purpose of the Act was to effect in one way what the Land League and the National League strove to effect in another way, namely, the abolition of landlords. However, half measures had proved intolerable failures: dual ownership had but aggravated the friction: and, at all events, Balfour's Act was preferable to Gladstone's Bill of 1886, in that no Irish Parliament was interposed between the Imperial Treasury and its debtors—the Irish farmers and peasantry.

Irish Land Purchase Act, 1891.

In other ways Balfour was redeeming the Chief Secretary's office from its evil renown as the reef upon which so many reputations had been wrecked. The season of 1890 was disastrous to the potato and other crops in Ireland, and destitution became severe in the southern and western districts. Not content with such temporary alleviation as was obtained through a grant from the Treasury, Mr. Balfour, accompanied by Mr. Jackson, Secretary to the Treasury,[1] travelled far and wide through the counties where distress was worst, determined that wherever relief works could be undertaken they should contribute to the permanent development of the resources of the country. Light railways were laid out in order to encourage tourist traffic

[1] Created Lord Allerton in 1902.

and facilitate the carriage of fish and dairy produce, the contractors being held bound to employ the local peasantry on the works. The two Ministers moved about the country in unostentatious manner, without any police escort, and were received everywhere with such effusive gratitude as gave an agreeable glimpse of the relations which might prevail between the sister countries—*sua si bono norint.*

But the time was at hand when Mr. Balfour was to hand over the administration of Irish affairs to Mr. Jackson, in order to undertake more comprehensive work.

Death of W. H. Smith, 6th Oct. 1891.

On the same day that Parnell died, Mr. W. H. Smith, leader of the House of Commons, breathed his last. He was only sixty-six, but the strain of recent sessions, especially the memorable one of 1887,[1] had told severely upon him, completely shattering a naturally good constitution. To describe Smith as popular would be to apply to him an adjective debased by indiscriminate use; but a perfect temper, an amiable nature and strong common sense had won for him something warmer than esteem in all quarters of the House of Commons. While his strict, but unostentatious, piety earned for him the sobriquet of "Old Morality," his business training (an advantage with which too few statesmen are equipped) secured the confidence of his colleagues and the House. Perhaps the general regard in which Smith was held cannot be better illustrated than by repeating the observation of a Radical member spoken to a Conservative in the neutral atmosphere of the House of Commons smoking-room. "You know," said he, "you have an immense advantage over us, for your fellows *hate* the Grand Old Man;[2] but who can help liking *Old Morality?*"

A third conspicuous figure was removed by death from the House of Commons during the session of 1890–91. On 27th January 1891, on the motion of Dr. Hunter, the House unanimously decreed that the resolution of 21st June 1880 expelling Charles Bradlaugh should be expunged.[3] A tribute, this, to the reputation Bradlaugh had gained for inflexible honesty

Death of Charles Bradlaugh, 30th Jan. 1891.

[1] When Parliament sat from 27th January till 16th September.
[2] Mr. Gladstone.
[3] See p. 129, *supra*.

of word and purpose; but it came too late to gratify his feelings, for he was lying unconscious at the time, and died three days later.

The outstanding piece of legislation in the session of 1890–91 was the Free Education Act, exceeding in importance even the Irish Land Purchase Act, inasmuch as it affected the population of all three kingdoms. The approaching demise of the Parliament by efflux of time gave the Bill the semblance of a propitiatory sacrifice to Demos, for Ministers had hitherto persistently discouraged the idea entertained by many Unionists, that relief from school fees was the natural and just corollary of compulsory education. School fees represented only a small part of the total cost of elementary education, the burden being laid chiefly on the payers of imperial taxes and local rates. There were many in the Liberal party, Gladstone himself among others,[1] who had shivered when Chamberlain pressed his colleagues to make free education part of their programme in 1885; but Chamberlain, though not holding office in 1891, wielded great power in Unionist councils. Moreover, under the Local Government (Scotland) Act, 1889, the grant in aid of local rates which Goschen had established in 1888 had been allocated in Scotland to the payment of school fees—a precedent which made it difficult to refuse applying the same principle to England. Therefore, as Goschen had a surplus of two millions to dispose of, the thing was done *nemine contradicente*, to the exuberant delight of Unionist party agents, who however were doomed to be disappointed of the anticipated reward. The British electorate invariably reserves its gratitude for favours to come.

Free Education, 1891.

The year 1891, which had already seen the removal from the House of Commons of three of its most conspicuous figures—Smith, Parnell and Bradlaugh—was not to close without the withdrawal of a fourth. By the death of the Duke of Devonshire and the consequent accession of Lord Hartington to a peerage, the leadership of the Liberal-Unionists in the Commons devolved upon Mr. Chamberlain. These two men who, half-a-dozen years before, had stood at

[1] Morley's *Gladstone*, iii. 173–4, 224.

the opposite poles of Liberalism, had laid aside the differences which went near to wrecking Gladstone's second administration. The perfect harmony with which they now worked together betokened at once the depth and width of the new cleavage effected by Gladstone in the Liberal party, and the permanence of the alliance between Liberal-Unionists and Conservatives—an alliance for which, at the time it was formed, political meteorologists had predicted a very brief endurance.

Death of H.R.H. the Duke of Clarence, 14th Jan. 1892.

The winter of 1891–92 was marked by an outbreak of that subtle epidemic which has hitherto baffled medical and scientific research, and for which, in default of identifying its active agent, we are fain to borrow the Italian term—*influenza*. Among those who succumbed to it was Prince Albert Victor, Duke of Clarence, eldest son of the Prince of Wales, and consequently prospective heir to the throne. He was in his twenty-eighth year, and unmarried.

The succeeding summer was passed in agitated preparation for a general election; and Gladstone went forth upon a fresh Midlothian campaign. He was eighty-two, but not for him was the line written—*Lenit albescens animum capillus*. The only change wrought by age seemed to be a more passionate concentration of his energy upon the establishment of an Irish Parliament. By his presence and voice at the great Liberal conference in the previous autumn he had given his sanction to the wild congeries of sectional hobbies known as the Newcastle programme; but although his capacity for physical exertion appeared to be unimpaired, his mind was less alert than of old to affairs, foreign and domestic, lying outside his Irish horizon.

Dissolution of Parliament, 26th June 1892.

Parliament was dissolved on 26th June. In 1886 the Unionist Ministry could reckon on a clear majority of 116 in the House of Commons; but Sir George Trevelyan and some others who had joined the Liberal-Unionists at first had since ebbed back to the Gladstonian ranks, and the Government had fared so ill in by-elections that their majority at the dissolution stood as low as 66. Even that was swept away at the polls, and Ministers returned to Westminster in a

minority of 40, the exact figure by which, when the new Parliament met in August, Mr. Asquith's motion of no confidence was carried against them.[1] Lord Salisbury resigned at once, and Mr. Gladstone proceeded to form his fourth and last Cabinet.

Lord Rosebery, not without misgiving, took the Foreign Office, Mr. Morley went back to the Irish Office, and Mr. Asquith became Home Secretary. Among the Ministers outside the Cabinet the most notable was young Sir Edward Grey, who, albeit he was suspected of greater devotion to angling and the tennis-court than to politics, was strangely enough regarded by many Radicals at that time as heir-presumptive to the premiership.

Mr. Gladstone's fourth administration, 10th Aug. 1892–1st March 1894.

Although the Queen's speech to Parliament, when it re-assembled on 31st January 1893, contained articulate echoes of the Newcastle programme, every other consideration was merged in anticipation of the new Home Rule Bill, which was introduced by the Prime Minister on 13th February. It differed from the former Bill mainly in respect that, while it provided for the establishment of a dual-chamber Parliament in Dublin, 80 out of the 103 Irish members were to be retained in the Imperial Parliament. The debates excited none of that sustained interest which made those on the first Home Rule Bill more memorable than any since the days of the Reform Bill of 1832. The course of the Bill was foreseen from the first. The Commons would pass it—they gave it a second reading on 22nd April, by a majority of 43; and the Lords would reject it—they gave it its quietus on 8th September, by a majority of 378—419 to 41.[2] But

The second Home Rule Bill, 1893.

[1] The election was not without its surprises. Mr. Gladstone, who had been returned for Midlothian in 1885 by a majority of 4634 over Mr. (now Sir Charles) Dalrymple, and who was not opposed in 1886, only obtained a majority of 690 over Colonel Wauchope in 1892. On the other hand, Mr. Ritchie, author of the Local Government Act, lost his seat for Tower Hamlets. Altogether the Conservatives lost 57 seats, the Liberal-Unionists 23, and the Parnellites, as distinguished from the Anti-Parnellites, were reduced to 9 in number. The division on Mr. Asquith's motion was the largest on record —350 to 310, which, deducting the Speaker and four tellers, accounted for all but five members of the whole House.

[2] The Duke of Devonshire, who as Lord Hartington in the Commons had moved the rejection of the Bill of 1886, discharged the same duty in the Lords for the Bill of 1893.

between those dates the Unionists in the Commons fought the measure as hard as if there had been no House of Lords to rely on. Amid many "scenes"—some merely riotous, others perilously angry—which marked the proceedings in Committee, two things stand out beyond others in memory; first, the almost incredible resources of argument, analogy, eloquent reminiscence and anticipation displayed by the octogenarian Premier in the unflagging prosecution of his measure; second, the control which the Speaker, Mr. Arthur Peel, exercised over the House at moments of crucial excitement. His stature was commanding, his presence dignified, his manner suave and firm; but it is worthy of remark, in a country where it is the fashion to eschew official dress, civil or military, as much as possible, how greatly his authority was enhanced by the traditional wig and gown. Custom prescribes that the Chairman of Committee shall preside in ordinary evening dress, which happens to be identical with that worn by thousands of waiters in hotels and restaurants. Having, therefore, no exterior indication of authority, except his seat at the head of the table, he must rely solely upon his own nerve and judgment in conducting the debate, and these sometimes are overridden in agitating times. Thus it happened on a night in July when the Home Rule Bill was in Committee, that the two sides got into such angry altercation as threatened to lead—nay, actually did, lead in the persons of a few members—to physical violence. The Chairman did his best, but was utterly inaudible in the din, and sent for the Speaker. No sooner did Mr. Peel ascend the chair than the tumult was stilled; members, yielding unconscious homage to the stately garments, gave him the hearing they had refused to the Chairman, and the incident was at an end.

All through the dog-days the fight over the bill went on,[1] the third reading being carried on 1st September by a majority of thirty-four, when it was despatched to its doom in the Upper Chamber. The degree in which the nation had set its heart upon this ill-starred measure may be gauged by the complete indifference with which its fate was regarded outside the walls of Parliament. Except

[1] It occupied sixty-three sittings in Committee.

among the Irish members and a few of their Radical allies, there was heard none of that bitter malediction of the House of Lords which follows upon the rejection of a really popular measure.[1] The fact is England, "the predominant partner" in the Union, to quote Lord Rosebery's felicitous phrase, was strongly against Home Rule, and even in Scotland (as shown, *inter alia*, by the result of the poll in Midlothian) it was shorn of its chief attraction by the proposal to retain the Irish members at Westminster. Many seats in the North of England and in Scotland were already controlled by the Irish labour vote; if, in addition to that inequitable condition, four-fifths of the Irish members were to continue to administer English, Scottish and Imperial affairs, while Irish affairs were to be withdrawn from Imperial control, the existing disparity in representation would only be aggravated.

Grievous and seemingly incurable as are the grievances cherished in Ireland against Great Britain, there is one subject to which the hearts of all the three nations warm in unison—proud affection for the Royal Navy. The news, therefore, that the battleship *Victoria* had gone down with all hands in the Mediterranean was received as a calamity affecting all parts of the United Kingdom. In executing a manœuvre ordered by Admiral Sir George Tryon, the *Victoria* collided with the *Camperdown*, and sank in a few minutes, carrying the Admiral beyond the range of censure, for he perished, and with him 30 officers and 320 men.

Loss of H.M.S. *Victoria*, 22nd June 1893.

This tremendous disaster told upon the House of Commons in twofold manner; first, by bringing before it the condition of the fleet, and second, by becoming the indirect cause of the Prime Minister's final withdrawal from public life. No thought of resignation had presented itself to him on account of the defeat of the Home Rule Bill in the Lords. He wished, indeed—wished strongly—by dissolving Parliament to appeal to the country upon the question of the relations between the two Houses, but to

[1] Gladstone was responsible for the creation of a greater number of peers than any other Premier during the nineteenth century. Sixty-two of those who owed their peerages to his recommendation were in the majority against his Bill.

this course his colleagues flatly refused assent.[1] To go to the country without having made any attempt to carry a single item in the Newcastle programme would be, they thought, to court humiliation. Wherefore, Parliament having adjourned on 22nd September, this weary session was resumed on 2nd November to take up the Parish Councils and Employers Liability Bills. On 10th December Lord George Hamilton called attention to the state of the Royal Navy. He knew his subject, having been First Lord of the Admiralty in Salisbury's first and second administrations, and he was aware of the concern felt by the Sea Lords for the decrease in British sea power in proportion to other European navies. He called upon Parliament to increase the votes so as to restore the two-Power standard; that is, to maintain the fleet at a strength equal to the combined fleets of any two first-class Powers. Gladstone would not hear of it: he rebuked Hamilton for infringing the responsibility of Ministers, who, he declared, were the only proper authority for proposing expenditure, the House of Commons being responsible only for checking it. Party discipline sufficed to secure the rejection of Hamilton's motion; but Gladstone's troubles were not to be ended by a successful party division. He had to deal with a majority of his Cabinet whom he could not persuade to view, as he did, the proposed increase of the Navy as militarism. "I have come," he said to Mr. Morley, "to be considered not only an English but a European statesman. My name stands in Europe as a symbol of the policy of peace, moderation, and non-aggression. What would be said of my active participation in a policy that will be taken as plunging England into a whirlpool of militarism?"[2]

Dearly as Gladstone's colleagues cherished his European prestige, profoundly as they respected his authority, far as they had followed him in departing from the ancient ways, the majority of them proved inflexible in support of Lord Spencer's demand for the additional expenditure of £4,240,000 on the Navy. Harcourt, as Chancellor of the Exchequer, backed his chief in resisting it, but the feeling in the Cabinet, in Parliament and in the country was over-

[1] Morley's *Gladstone*, iii. 505. [2] Ibid., 508.

whelming in favour of maintaining British supremacy at sea; not, certainly, for any aggressive purpose or spirited foreign policy, but simply for the necessary protection of our colonies and commerce. Wherefore, finding that his counsel could not prevail, Gladstone made up his mind to retire from office; nor were there wanting valid reasons besides the difference in the Cabinet. His years were fourscore and five, and although neither in vigour of thought nor in readiness of speech was there any symptom of decay, both hearing and eyesight were greatly impaired. He took leave of his colleagues at a Cabinet Council on 1st March 1894, and made his last speech in the House of Commons on the same afternoon. It was a fierce denunciation of the House of Lords and their action in throwing out the Home Rule Bill, and it ended with a menace against the fulfilment of which the Unionist Government, which was shortly to enter upon ten years of office, would have acted wisely had they prepared a measure of reform, as they were urged by many of their supporters to do.

Retirement of Mr. Gladstone, 2nd March 1894.

Gladstone's retirement being sudden and unforeseen, there was little time for speculation as to his successor. All the omens indicated Sir William Harcourt as heir presumptive to the premiership, and Harcourt undoubtedly considered his own claim to be paramount; but it was matter of common knowledge at the time that certain members of the Gladstone Cabinet would not consent to serve under Harcourt. What was not known then, as has since been made clear, is that if the Queen had consulted Gladstone in the matter he was prepared to recommend Lord Spencer,[1] despite the bitter disparagement of the House of Lords uttered on the previous day. The Queen, however, did not seek Gladstone's counsel, but sent for Lord Rosebery; Sir William Harcourt, with ill-concealed displeasure, succeeding to the lead of the House of Commons.

Lord Rosebery becomes Prime Minister, 3rd March 1894.

Harcourt was far from being the only member of the

[1] Morley's *Gladstone*, iii. 512. Writing almost immediately after these events, Mr. Justin M'Carthy dismisses as inconceivable the suggestion that the Queen acted without Mr. Gladstone's advice. (*History of Our Own Times* v. 364.)

Liberal party who resented the Queen's choice of a Minister. From a Radical point of view the objections to Lord Rosebery were many and intelligible. He had never sat in the House of Commons; as leader of an insignificant minority in the House of Lords he would never be able to exercise the restraining influence upon the action of the majority which had been wielded timeously on occasions by Wellington, Beaconsfield, and Salisbury. Above all, he was known to have been lukewarm in his support of Gladstone's Irish measures. It is true that, on assuming office, he proclaimed himself to a meeting of the Liberal party at the Foreign Office "as bound by every tie of honour and policy" to those measures; but in speaking on the Address that very evening (12th March) in the House of Lords he made the memorable declaration that "before Irish Home Rule is conceded by the Imperial Parliament, England, as the predominant member in the partnership of the three kingdoms, will have to be convinced of its justice." Manifestation of Radical resentment against this unpalatable doctrine did not tarry. On the very next day Mr. Henry Labouchere moved an amendment to the Address censuring the House of Lords. No Government can accept any amendment to the Address, which is, in effect, a declaration of their settled policy. On this occasion Harcourt made but a half-hearted defence of the Prime Minister, with the consequence that the amendment was carried by a majority of two—technically a vote of no confidence in Ministers. Here was a dilemma, wherein Mr. Labouchere exhibited an impish delight, for his ability and energy in the Radical cause had not received recognition when Gladstone formed his last Cabinet. The only solution was for the Government to quash the amendment by a negative vote on the Address itself, which they obtained by means of Unionist support.

Sir William Harcourt, in preparing his budget, was confronted with a deficit of two millions. To provide against this he proposed a new form of taxation which, we may believe, did not commend itself to him the less because it hit hardest the owners, or rather the suc-

cessors to the owners, of real property (that is, of land and houses), who constitute the majority of the House of Lords. At that time, and ever since 1853, when Gladstone first made real property subject to succession duty, the taxation upon property passing from a deceased owner was unnecessarily complicated and admittedly unequal in its incidence. It was of four kinds —(1) Probate duty upon personal property; (2) Account duty, imposed in 1881 to cover certain transactions in personalty which escaped Probate duty; (3) Legacy duty levied on the successor to personalty at rates regulated by consanguinity; (4) Succession duty, calculated upon the life interest of a person succeeding to settled personalty and to real property. During Lord Randolph Churchill's brief term of office at the Treasury, he devised a reform of this system with the double purpose of simplifying it and making it yield more revenue. In doing so he had to decide between two matters of assessment; one, basing taxation on the total value of the property, real and personal, of the deceased; the other, making the value of each individual inheritance the unit of taxation. The importance of this question to those who should pay the death duty consisted in the principle of graduation, which Churchill was prepared to apply according to the value of the property passing. The temptation to a Chancellor of the Exchequer in need of revenue was to impose a graduated *estate* duty instead of a graduated *succession* duty, because the rate of taxation would be higher on the whole estate than upon the parts of it inherited by several individuals. That temptation Churchill resisted: "My instinct tells me that it is wrong," he said, after a long discussion at Somerset House.[1] Harcourt indulged no such compunction; and although he only received a majority of 14 for the second reading of his Finance Bill, he carried it successfully through Committee, establishing death duties based, not upon the value of the inheritance, as Churchill would have done, but upon the *aggregate* value of the deceased's estate. The rate of taxation imposed by the Finance Act of 1894 bore no proportion to the

The Death Duties, 1894.

[1] Winston Churchill's *Life of Lord Randolph Churchill*, ii. 195.

benefit actually conveyed to one succeeding, but only to the total property of the deceased. Thus, if a person owning property of the principal value of £10,000 were to leave it in equal portions to his five children, they would each have to pay death duty at the rate of 3 per cent., or £60. But if A. were to inherit property worth £2000 from B., whose estate was valued at £75,000, he would be taxed at the rate of 5½ per cent., or £110; and if B.'s estate were worth £1,000,000, the inheritance of £2000 would be taxed at 8 per cent., or £160.[1]

How little this effect was generally understood may be gathered from the explanation of Harcourt's budget offered by Mr. Justin M'Carthy, who was himself a member of Parliament at the time, having succeeded Parnell as leader of the Irish party. "The idea," he says, "was very simple. It was, that if a man comes in for a vast property he must pay duties on a different scale of arrangement from that which applies to a man who comes in for a small inheritance."[2] Few will dispute the justice of applying taxation according to the ability of the individual to bear it (although Gladstone never could reconcile graduation with his principles of finance), but that is precisely what Harcourt's death duties did not effect. The scale of taxation was made to bear no relation whatever to the value of an inheritance, only to the aggregate wealth of a person who had passed beyond the radius of the tax-collector.

The Liberal Government did not long survive the loss of their veteran leader. Of Lord Rosebery's ability there could be no question; he had administered the Foreign Office wisely and well; as a versatile and polished orator he had no rival when the matter was to his liking; but he could not be suspected of any enthusiasm for the legislative projects which were dearest to the Radicals, and the very existence of the ministry depended upon the goodwill of Radicals and Irish Nationalists. The secret of Gladstone's enormous power lay in his resolution to be at the head of every popular movement that made itself

[1] These duties have been greatly increased by Mr. Lloyd George's budget of 1909.

[2] *History of Our Own Times*, v. 381.

sufficiently formidable. He was no demagogue, in the sense of initiating and fomenting convulsion, but when the upheaval took place he, and none other, should "ride the whirlwind and direct the storm." The dangerous plasticity of his intellect enabled him to convince himself of the exclusive righteousness of every cause that he embraced, no matter what violation it involved of principles he had once professed as cardinal.

Very different was Lord Rosebery's attitude towards subversive measures. By tradition and prepossession a Whig—by apprenticeship and association a Liberal—lukewarm acquiescence was all that he could yield to Home Rule and interference with the rights of property. In the seclusion of the Foreign Office he had maintained a strong Imperial policy, but in general politics he only refrained from dissociating himself formally from his party through dread of the consequences should all men of wealth and influence gravitate to the Conservative side. The Liberal-Unionist secession had brought about that result to an extent which he considered dangerous, and he sought to check the movement by remaining in the Liberal party, over which he hoped to exercise some such restraint as Melbourne and Palmerston did. But the political atmosphere is now far more electric than it was before the press attained its present power. The only result of a platonic pose in politics is to nullify such influence as a man might exert were he to throw it into the scale with his genuine convictions. "Who drives fat oxen must himself be fat;" he who would lead Radicals must either be a Radical in-grain, or be able to persuade himself, as Gladstone did, that he has a divine mission to lead them.[1] Without one or other of these forces to generate the magnetism of command, Liberal statesmen become mere milestones marking how far the ancient landmarks have been left behind. Lord Rosebery's talents are of so high an order that one cannot

[1] On 8th April 1886, the day when Gladstone introduced his first Home Rule Bill, he wrote in his diary: "The message came to me this morning—'Hold thou up my goings in thy path, that my footsteps slip not.' . . . My speech . . . lasted three and a half hours. Voice and strength and freedom were granted to me in a degree beyond what I could have hoped. But many a prayer had gone up for me, and not, I believe, in vain." (Morley's *Gladstone*, iii. 310.)

but deplore the course that has isolated him from both the great parties in the State as a "shrill proclaimer of the lonely hour."

By their abortive Local Veto Bill of 1893, and the death duties of 1894, the Government had created a formidable spirit of resentment in the country. The platform tirade against the House of Lords had ended in the appointment of a peer as Premier, which was little to the liking of earnest Radicals; nor could matters be expected to go very smoothly within the walls of Parliament, where Rosebery could only count on the support of a minority, numerically insignificant, in the upper chamber, while the leader of the Commons brooded over his own comparative effacement. Still, Ministers met Parliament on 5th February 1895 with a bold front and a full programme. Mr. Asquith introduced a Bill for disestablishing and disendowing the Church in Wales, which took up most of the time in the Commons till midsummer, by which date Harcourt had secured the acceptance of his budget only through propitiating the Irish members by taking sixpence a gallon off spirits.

It looked as if the Ministry were going to weather another session, though people were already speculating as to what treatment the Welsh Church Bill would receive at the hands of the Lords. The Bill never reached them. Politics would be a simple craft if the unexpected did not happen so often. It happened on Friday, 21st June, when the House of Commons was discussing Mr. Campbell-Bannerman's Army Estimates. All was proceeding very smoothly; "the colonels" were contributing comments and criticism in no polemic spirit, and members not specially versed in military matters were pairing pacifically for the night; when suddenly the Hon. St. John Brodrick, who had been Financial Secretary to the War Office in the previous Government, moved a reduction of £100 in the Secretary of State's salary, by way of marking dissatisfaction with what was held to be an insufficient store of small-arms ammunition. The Committee divided. So little was any risk of a Government defeat anticipated that, when the numbers were

Defeat and resignation of Ministers, 21st June 1895.

brought to the clerk at the table, he handed the paper to Mr. Ellis, the Ministerial Whip. Ellis looked at it before announcing the numbers, and handed it to Mr. Akers Douglas, the Conservative Whip. The unexpected had come to pass—Ayes, 132; Noes, 125—leaving the Government in a minority of seven.

In ordinary times a division snapped in a thin Committee would not have affected the stability of any Government that was reasonably secure in its position. If a vote of confidence were required, it would be moved and the mishap retrieved. But this Government was the reverse of secure. Its majority in the Commons was composite and fluctuating; there was no certainty that a vote of confidence could be carried. Moreover, Campbell-Bannerman declined to continue in office after the House of Commons had passed censure upon his administration; so the Cabinet, unable any longer to keep up even a semblance of unanimity, accepted the cordite vote as an excuse for evacuating an untenable position, and resigned forthwith.

Death of Lord Randolph Churchill, 24th Jan. 1895.

One figure was missing from the front Opposition bench when the Rosebery ministry received its deathblow—the figure of one who was wont to be foremost in every fray, leading actor in every Parliamentary episode, grave or gay. In 1891 Randolph Churchill had shaken the dust of Parliament from his shoes and set out upon prolonged African travel. In November of that year he wrote to his wife from Mafeking:—

"So Arthur Balfour is really leader, and Tory-Democracy—the genuine article—at an end! Well, I have had quite enough of it all. I have waited with great patience for the tide to turn; but it has not turned, and will not now turn in time. In truth, I am now altogether *déconsideré*. . . . No power will make me lift hand or foot or voice for the Tories, just as no power would make me join the other side. . . . I am quite tired and dead sick of it all, and will not continue political life any longer."

Nevertheless when he returned in 1892 to find the Unionist party under the shadow of approaching defeat, his gallant spirit would not let him rest. "He smelleth

the battle afar off, the thunder of the captains and the shouting." At the general election he was elected once more for Paddington, and took his place in the fighting line among his old comrades, who were but too glad to welcome him back. The coincidence of names was not the only feature in his return that brought to the minds of some of them the old Scots lilt:

"O Randal was a bonnie lad when he ga'ed awa',
A bonnie, bonnie lad was he when he ga'ed awa';
Wi' a feather in his bonnet and a tear in his e'e,
When Randal the laird's youngest son ga'ed awa'.

. . . . . .

O Randal was an altered man when he cam' again,
A sair, sair altered man was he when he cam' again,
Wi' a ribbon on his breast and a 'Sir' afore his name,
But wi' grey, grey locks did Sir Randal come hame."

Haggard, bald, tremulous and heavily bearded, it was hard to recognise in him the dauntless young chief upon whom all Unionist hopes had centred so few summers back. The brain was still as clear, the spirit as intrepid, as of old; but the poor tongue halted sadly and the utterance was thick and broken. The whole House, every party in it, was moved with compassion. Physical wreck though he was, he fought through the session of 1893 and, not content with triumph in obsequious Paddington, carried war into the enemy's lines at Bradford, where he resolved to stand at the next election. It was of the nature of his malady that he could not realise its insidious advance. No professional warnings, no entreaties of kith and kin, prevailed to make him spare himself. He undertook a long series of public meetings in the autumn, each one more painfully affecting his hearers than the last, for by this time his articulation had become barely intelligible. All was over by Christmas—all the life, at least, that he cared to live; for, although he lingered for another twelve months, and though they sent him, with his beautiful wife, on a journey round the world, the circuit was never finished. He was brought back to England to die on 24th January 1895, being aged only forty-six.

Of Randolph Churchill's parts and power some estimate has been given in a former chapter.[1] It is impossible for any Unionist to review without chagrin a career of such unusual promise—of such brilliant development—so needlessly, or at least heedlessly, wrecked. It was stormy, it was meteoric—to a certain point it was splendidly triumphant; but it has had a grave and lasting effect upon the course of the Unionist party, and specially upon the Conservative wing of that party. Making every allowance for the measure in which Conservative views and aspirations had to be adjusted to render coalition with Liberal-Unionists practicable, far more than that is needed to account for the laxity and flux of those principles during the last twenty years of the century. Conservative candidates now pledge themselves on platforms to measures which can only be described as unmitigated Radicalism, and they do so in order to obtain Radical votes. Strong is the inclination to quote once more Horace's well-worn couplet —*Rem, facias rem*, &c.

They would fain be Conservatives if they could, but they are still more fain to win their elections; so they do hire themselves out for the work of their opponents. There can be no doubt that Churchill's influence and example, and all the paradoxical nonsense he promulgated about Tory-Democracy, vastly encouraged and accelerated the rot of Conservative principles. Disraeli, indeed, first led the party astray by his Reform Act of 1867, which his chief in a moment of imprudent candour admitted was devised to "dish the Whigs";[2] but Disraeli lived to redeem that blot by years of wise and temperate government. Churchill did not so live; and it is largely owing to his agency that almost the only definite points wherein the Unionist policy differs from the Radical, is that it does not count Socialist support, that it will not entertain Home Rule for Ireland, and that it proposes to lighten taxation at home and strengthen the bonds of Empire by reversing the system of universal free imports. These being the circumstances of the time, is it of much moment whether

[1] See chapter vi. p. 130, and viii. 177 *et passim*.
[2] See vol. ii. p. 338.

the citizens vote red or blue? Are party politics more than a noisy, exciting game—part chance, part craft? Will the State and the Commonwealth greatly suffer if Conservatives abandon principles which they hold by so loosely? The answer may be found in the analogue of organic life. In all living bodies there are two agencies perpetually at work—one destructive, involving waste of tissue as the result of active movement—the other constructive, replacing that waste through nourishment and cell growth. It is upon the just balance of the two that the creature depends for healthy existence. In youth, the period of growth, the constructive agency predominates, else the creature could never attain maturity; in the prime of life the forces are evenly matched; but in old age waste goes on faster than repair. If this illustration be accepted as applicable to the body politic, it may be divined that if the constructive or Conservative party lends itself to competition in the functions of the destructive or Radical party, the end of the constitution cannot be long deferred. Is it too much to expect of men aspiring to public life that they should be content to serve without much hope of any reward except that of a sound conscience?

CHAPTER X

Lord Salisbury's third administration—Sir John Gorst and the Education Bill—The Venezuela Boundary dispute—Arbitration Treaty with the United States—New South Wales colonised—Foundation of sheep-farming in Australia—Victoria proclaimed a colony—South Australia proclaimed a colony—Queensland proclaimed a colony—Tasmania proclaimed a colony—Settlement of West Australia—Annexation of New Zealand—War with the Maoris—Cape Colony ceded to Great Britain—Wars with the Kaffres—Discovery of diamonds—Cecil John Rhodes—Annexation of Bechuanaland—Opening of the Rand goldfield—Lo Bengula's concession—Germany in South Africa—German annexation of Angra Pequena—British annexation of Mashonaland—First Matabele War—Acquisition of Matabele Land—Foundation of Rhodesia—Sir William Mackinnon—The British East African Company.

In allowing themselves to be driven from office by a hostile vote on an administrative detail, the Liberal leaders missed the chance of appealing to the country upon the issue bequeathed by Gladstone in his last speech in Parliament—the veto of the House of Lords. Tactically, that might have given them a better chance; though it is doubtful whether they could have fared much better at the general election which took place in July, for the main offence of the Lords had been the rejection of the Home Rule Bill, which was unpopular in English constituencies, and did not attract much favour in Scotland. Ireland remained of the same complexion as before, and the general result was a House differing from the old one thus—

1892		1895	
Liberals	273	Conservatives	340
Irish Nationalists	81	Liberal-Unionists	71
	354		411
Conservatives	268	Liberals	177
Liberal-Unionists	47	Irish Nationalists	82
	315		259
Home Rule majority	39	Unionist majority,	152

The alliance of Conservatives and Liberal-Unionists had stood so firmly the test of nine strenuous years that it would have been unreasonable to allow the ill-favour associated with coalitions to stand any longer in the way of more complete fusion. For electoral purposes it was deemed prudent that the two wings of the party should retain their several denominations and organisations in the constituencies, but Lord Salisbury obtained a notable accession of strength by the inclusion in his Cabinet of several Liberal-Unionists. The Duke of Devonshire became President of the Council; Sir Henry James (whose opposition to Home Rule had been the only bar between him and the Woolsack) received a peerage and a sinecure in the shape of the Chancellorship of the Duchy of Lancaster; and much did people marvel when it was announced that Mr. Chamberlain had accepted the seals of the Colonial Office. Despite the prodigious increase of the area of empire during the century and the growth in power and wealth of British colonies, the fact that the most important of these colonies were self-governing caused men to regard the legislative tie attaching them to the mother country as one that might, and probably would, be slipped any day by mutual consent. Chamberlain was strong in initiative; there seemed to be less field for the exercise of that faculty in the Colonial Office than in any other of the great departments of State. He was not without ambition; his enemies (and they were neither few nor reticent) declared that it was his aim to oust Mr. Balfour from the leadership of the Commons, and that he had chosen the department which would leave him most leisure to further that scheme. They mistook their man. To follow the development of Chamberlain's colonial policy, to describe the means whereby he designed to add the bonds of common interest to those of kinship, language and tradition, would carry this narrative beyond the limits of the century assigned to it; but this much may be said here and now that, during the nine years intervening between Chamberlain's entrance into the Unionist Cabinet and the ruthless stroke of fate that consigned him, while still in the plenitude of his remarkable powers, to an

Lord Salisbury's third administration, June 1895.

invalid habit, no man ever gave more heart-whole loyalty to his chiefs than he did to Lord Salisbury and Mr. Balfour.

Goschen left his former office of Chancellor of the Exchequer to Sir Michael Hicks-Beach and became First Lord of the Admiralty; Lord Salisbury kept the Foreign Office, and Mr. Balfour became First Lord of the Treasury, and Leader of the House of Commons.

It was inevitable that the admission of so many Liberal-Unionists to the Ministry should cause some disappointment and heart-burning among Conservatives who aspired to office. Lord Salisbury was criticised at the time for not taking into his Cabinet one man to whom he gave a subordinate post, and who certainly felt, and took an early opportunity of showing that he felt, that his services and undoubted ability had been much underrated. Except Mr. Balfour, Sir John Gorst was the only member of the original Fourth Party remaining in Parliament. Churchill was no more, Wolff had been sent as Ambassador to the Court of Spain, and to Gorst was now assigned the office of Vice-President of the Committee of Council on Education. In that capacity he had charge of the principal measure of the session of 1895, which gave him a fair opportunity of showing his quality in the management of so thorny a subject. The object of the Education Bill was to settle the dispute which had been seething ever since Forster's Act of 1870, as to whether public money should be applied in aid of any education that was not purely secular. As the bill did not become law, there is no occasion here to discuss its provisions; but the impression left on the House of Commons by Sir John Gorst's conduct thereof can scarcely be passed *sub silentio.* He shares with Burke the resurrectionist, Macadam the road-maker, and Captain Boycott, the victim of the Irish Land League, the distinction of adding to the English vocabulary one of that exiguous group of verbs derived from proper names. In Lord Salisbury's second administration Gorst, as Under-Secretary for India, had created an unpleasant surprise for his colleagues by a speech in which, while it was his duty to explain and justify the policy of his chief and the Indian Council in relation to the native state of

Sir John Gorst and the Education Bill, 1895.

Manipur,[1] he took occasion to review and bring into contempt the dealings of British statesmen, past and present, with the peoples and states of India. From that moment "to manipur" became a phrase indicating one who, reversing the rôle of Balaam, cursed that which he had been called upon to bless. And so it came to pass that when Gorst's sarcastic speech and perfunctory manner gave the impression that he was in very imperfect sympathy with his Liberal-Unionist chief,[2] men declared that he was "manipuring" the Education Bill. That the measure was ultimately withdrawn cannot be attributed solely to Sir John Gorst's languid interest in it, for it received almost as much destructive criticism from ministerialists as from the Opposition, but he certainly did not exert his remarkable debating power to save it. Sir John Gorst's subsequent career has failed to convince anybody that Lord Salisbury was wrong in not inviting him to join his Cabinet.[3]

The Unionist Cabinet commanded an immense majority in the House of Commons; to what use were they going to put it? Home Rule had been killed, or at least severely scotched; but surely something more than a mere negative had been conveyed in the voice of the constituencies. It was a time, favourable beyond any that might recur again, for undertaking well-considered reform of the constitution of both Houses of Parliament.

Electoral reform had been effected time after time; the constituencies had undergone complete metamorphosis both in magnitude and character, but, except a partial redistribution of seats, altogether out of proportion to the requirements of the case, no attempt had been made to adapt the House of Commons to the change.

Even more clamant was the case of the House of Lords. Many Unionists entertained confident hopes that now that the Home Rule bogey had been laid, the Government would take up the parting challenge delivered by Mr. Gladstone and, by a timely and well-considered scheme, condense the exorbitant number of peers into an effective

[1] Whence Englishmen derived the game of polo.
[2] The Duke of Devonshire.
[3] He stood for Preston in the Radical interest in 1910.

and well-balanced legislative chamber.[1] If the Unionist leaders were not specifically pledged to a readjustment of Parliamentary forces, they had said a great deal to encourage the belief that it was their purpose to deal with it.

"Can any Conservative," asked Sir Michael Hicks-Beach in 1887, "say that he is absolutely contented at present with the composition and working of the House of Lords? Can we not conceive it possible, by wise and careful change, to give that House greater popular authority and weight than it at present possesses?"

About the same time Mr. W. H. Smith spoke in a sense which seemed to indicate that a definite plan was in contemplation.

"No second chamber can long remain deaf to the public opinion of this country, but must advance toward it if that public opinion is consistent with the interests of the country. I accept the remark made by the honourable member for Southwark, that the reform of the House of Lords must come from the Conservative party and from the House of Lords."

Inepta verba, unless they portended action. The fact that they were spoken by men so high in authority reveals the uneasiness which they could not but feel about the strain put upon the Constitution every time a Liberal government came into power, and deepens the reproach

[1] The rate at which the House of Lords has been augmented since the accession of the Hanoverian dynasty may be seen in a tabular form showing the full number of peers, including those disabled by minority, &c., from sitting.

Year.	Sovereign.	Peers.		Total House of Lords.	Commons.			Total House of Commons.	Remarks.
		Lay.	Spiritual.		County.	Borough.	University.		
1714	George I. .	193	26	219*	122	432	4	558	* Including 16 representative Scottish peers.
1819	George III. .	342	30	372†	186	467	5	658	
1833	William IV.	370	30	400	253	399	6	658	† 28 Irish representative peers added by the Act of Union.
1881	Victoria . .	485	26	511	283	366	9	658	
1905	Edward VII.	568	26	594	377	284	9	670‡	‡ House of Commons increased by the Reform Act of 1885.
1911	George V. .	605	26	631	377	284	9	670	

upon the Unionist ministry which was in power, with ample —redundant—majorities from 1886 to 1906 (except the two years and a half from 1892 to 1895), and yet did nothing to mitigate the evil. Nay, but they began to do something. In 1888, the year after the speeches quoted above, Lord Salisbury introduced a bill for the creation of life Peers and the elimination of "black sheep"—that is, of noble Lords who had committed something ignoble. A pill to cure an earthquake! The measure bore upon its face the stamp of futility, and it was dropped. Next Lord Rosebery moved that the House should resolve itself into a committee to consider what changes in its constitution might be expedient. He spoke of "the indiscriminate and untempered application of the hereditary principle" as the main source of weakness in the House of Lords, a system which led Franklin to declare caustically that there would be more propriety, because less hazard of mischief, in making hereditary professors of mathematics than in creating hereditary legislators. Every part of the constitution has been reformed since the settlement of 1688, even the monarchy, through the appropriation by Parliament of the hereditary revenues and droits of the Crown, relieving the Sovereign of the whole cost of government and fixing the Civil List as the standard of his expenditure.

Years had told prematurely upon the Prime Minister. He was no longer the keen-sighted, fiery Robert Cecil of the old House of Commons days, nor yet the forceful, resourceful Salisbury of the Berlin Treaty. Indisposed for change, he caused the House to reject Lord Rosebery's motion, and thus was thrown away a fair opportunity for discussing in cool blood a reform which is likely to be hastily forged some day in a superheated atmosphere. *Fronte capillata, post est occasio calva.* While these lines are being penned (January 1911), the announcement of a powerful Radical Cabinet is before the country that they intend to deal with the House of Lords after a fashion too faithfully foreshadowed by the late Duke of Argyll in debate upon one of the proposals for reform.

"It is pretty plain [said he] what my noble friend means. He means that there shall continue to be a second Chamber, as

it is commonly called; but one that shall always agree with the House of Commons, and which shall always say 'ditto' to the House of Commons—a House of Lords whose voice is never to be heard except in the symphony of 'Amen'!"

If and when this comes to pass, the blame for such a deadly dismemberment of the Constitution will rest upon the Unionist ministry of 1895–1906, and many may live to recall remorsefully Cromwell's warning in the last speech he made in Parliament:

"I did tell you that I would not undertake such a Government as this unless there might be some other persons that might interpose between me and the House of Commons, who had the power to prevent tumultuary and popular spirits."

The anomaly of a purely hereditary House of Lords is not greater than the anomalous composition of what is professedly a purely representative House of Commons, and the Unionist Cabinet showed as much indifference to one as to the other. The defects of the House of Commons as representing the preponderant voice of the nation are three in number, to wit—(1) under-representation of minorities; (2) over-representation of Ireland; (3) disproportion in constituencies. Against all appeals to employ their great majority in rectifying these glaring defects Lord Salisbury's Cabinet opposed a blank refusal.

(1) The complexity of any scheme of proportional representation is so great that the reluctance of all governments to attempt reform in this direction may be understood, if not condoned. Nevertheless, so crying is the evil of the present system of election by bare majorities, so vast are the interests involved in what is commonly termed "the swing of the pendulum"—in other words, the sway from side to side of the worst informed and least responsible members of the electorate—that the persistent neglect of one Cabinet after another to devise, or attempt to devise, a remedy is one of the most deplorable outcomes of the party system. Yet it is not a question of greater moment to one party than to the other; the evil is recognised as affecting Tories and Liberals each in turn.[1]

[1] The following striking passage appeared in a Radical daily journal after the great Unionist defeat in 1906. "As Liberals we are proud of the great

(2) The over-representation of Ireland is a commonplace of parliamentary statistics. The following shows the relation between population and representation after the general election of January 1910.

Country.	Population.	Electors.	Members.
England and Wales	36,169,150	6,221,722	497
Scotland . .	4,929,251	785,208	70
Ireland . . .	4,371,163	698,787	103
United Kingdom .	45,479,564	7,705,717	670

From this it will be seen that whereas English and Welsh members each represent on an average 12,518 voters, Scottish members represent an average of 11,217, and Irish members an average of only 6784. This discrepancy is further aggravated by the presence of great numbers of Irish labourers in Great Britain, enough to turn the elections in several constituencies against any candidate who will not pledge himself to support the demands of the Nationalist party.

(3) The anomaly does not cease here. The borough of Kilkenny, with an electorate of 1742, and the borough of Galway, with an electorate of 2306, each returns a single member, which is all that is allowed to the Romford division of Essex with its 52,984 electors.

To devise and carry a reasonable scheme of redistribution of seats a Government needs to have command of a very large majority in the House of Commons, because every member whose constituency it is proposed to merge in another will vote against that part of the bill which

and enthusiastic majority which is ours in the present Parliament. As citizens we ought not to forget that, while each Liberal member speaks on an average for about 17,000 voters, each member of the Conservative minority may claim that behind him stand rather more than 17,000 voters. Under any reasonable proportional system the Opposition would number not 139, but about 252 members. . . . We are proud, as Liberals, to have the unanimous support of the thirty Welsh members; but a system of representation which, in effect, disfranchises the 96,000 Unionist voters in Wales admits of no theoretic defence. There are even more startling anomalies than these. The county of Warwick returned three Liberals and one Conservative; and yet the votes cast over the whole county gave the Conservatives a net majority of 469!" (*The Tribune*, 10th May 1906.)

threatens it. In the Parliament of 1895 the Unionist Government had a majority of 152, in that of 1900 they had one of 134, yet no attempt was made to redress these three anomalies. In 1832 parliamentary representation was made a reality for the people of the United Kingdom; shifting population and the growth of populous centres have so largely altered the basis of that representation as to make the voice of what professes to be a self-governing nation deceptive and dangerously misleading.

In 1889 Randolph Churchill complained to his friend Lord Rosebery, with good-humoured exaggeration, that "Salisbury was never happy out of that damned laboratory at Hatfield";[1] nevertheless whatever indifference Salisbury showed in domestic politics, no failure of vigour or vigilance affected his administration of foreign affairs. Towards the close of 1895 his attention was suddenly arrested by a turn of affairs on the American continent. The possessions of Great Britain in Central and Southern America consist of the Crown colonies of British Honduras and British Guiana, extending altogether to about 100,000 square miles and containing a population of some 350,000 souls. Dispute as to the exact boundaries between British Guiana and the Spanish colony (since 1829 the Republic) of Venezuela had been chronic ever since the British took their portion of Guiana from the Dutch in 1795; what raised it to importance was the discovery of gold within the debatable land, which made it necessary for the British Government to assert its rights for the protection of British subjects prospecting for the precious metal.

The Venezuelan boundary dispute, Dec. 1897.

On 17th December 1895 President Cleveland of the United States startled the world by a message to Congress, in which he declared that the action of the British Government in this matter infringed the Monroe doctrine, inasmuch as it was an attempt to impose monarchical government upon an unwilling people within the American continent;[2] that it was incumbent upon Congress to resist

[1] Lord Rosebery's *Lord Randolph Churchill*, p. 70. Lord Salisbury was an enthusiastic amateur in chemistry.

[2] See vol. i. p. 280.

such infringement, and that a Commission would be appointed to examine and report upon the respective rights of Great Britain and Venezuela. After that, continued the President, it would be "the duty of the United States to resist by every means in its power, as a wilful aggression upon its rights and interests, the appropriation by Great Britain of any lands which, after investigation, may be determined of right to belong to Venezuela."

Language of this sort bore an uncomfortable resemblance to open menace and a desire to force a quarrel. The only kind of concern that the United States Government had in the dispute was that the scene thereof lay in the American continent; and as Salisbury could not admit their right of interference or dictation, awkward complications seemed imminent. There arose in Great Britain much of the angry talk and mischievous writing that brought the two nations to the brink of war at the time of the *Alabama* claims.[1] Nevertheless out of the turmoil came an agreement of lasting benefit to both these great Powers. Salisbury, at no time a stickler for etiquette—international, personal, or social—assumed a conciliatory tone: Cleveland responded in a like temper, and the result was an agreement extending far beyond the petty squabble about mountain tops in Venezuela. A treaty was drawn up whereby all questions arising between the Governments of Great Britain and the United States which cannot be settled by negotiation should be referred to arbitration; pecuniary claims or groups of claims not exceeding £100,000 in aggregate to be referred to an arbitral tribunal consisting of a jurist of repute chosen by each Government, and an umpire; pecuniary claims exceeding £100,000 in amount to be referred to a tribunal of six judges, three from each country; disputes as to territory, fisheries, &c., to be submitted to a tribunal similarly chosen, and, in the event of the arbitrators failing to agree upon an umpire, the King of Norway and Sweden was to be invited to name one. If such a treaty as this does not render war between the contracting Powers impossible (for the first step in many wars

Arbitration Treaty with United States, 1897.

[1] See vol. ii. p 310.

has been the violation of solemn treaties), it renders war extremely unlikely, because it puts it in the power of either State which feels aggrieved, either in its rights or by affront to its flag, to refer that question to neutral arbitration which, without such a treaty, would have to go to the arbitrament of arms.

It has been observed above that when Mr. Chamberlain went to the Colonial Office he had chosen a department which offered but an indifferent field either for his constructive ability or his ambition. It proved to be one which should almost monopolise the anxious attention of the Government for some years to come. Whereas that attention was chiefly concentrated upon South Africa, this seems a fitting place for passing in succinct review the principal British dominions in the southern hemisphere, all of which date their development, and almost all of them their foundation, within the nineteenth century.

Among the many sayings of the Master cherished by his disciples, none seem to have impressed them more forcibly with its truth than that which three of the four evangelists have been careful to record, namely, that "a prophet is not without honour, but in his own country, and among his own kin, and in his own house." Consequently, when in the year 1788 Erasmus Darwin, grandfather of the illustrious Charles, foretold the still distant glory of Australia, few people, it may be imagined, paid much attention to him. Yet has the forecast so amply been fulfilled that the seer's vision ought not to be forgotten.

Josiah Wedgwood, the famous potter, having received a sample of clay from Sydney Cove, made some medallions thereof, representing Hope encouraging Art and Labour, and Erasmus Darwin wrote some lines entitled *Visit of Hope to Sydney Cove, near Botany Bay.*

> "Where Sydney Cove her lucid bosom swells,
> Courts her young navies and the storm repels,
> High on a rock amid the troubled air
> HOPE stood sublime and wav'd her golden hair,
> Calmed with her rosy smile the troubled deep,
> And with sweet accents charm'd the winds to sleep.

To each wide plain she stretch'd her snowy hand,
High-waving wood and sea-encircled strand.
'Hear me!' she cried, 'ye rising Realms record
Time's opening scenes and Truth's unerring word:
Here shall broad streets their stately walls extend,
The circus widen and the crescent bend;
There, rayed from cities o'er the cultured land,
Shall bright canals and solid roads expand;
Here the proud arch, colossus-like, bestride
Yon glittering streams, and bound the chasing tide,
Embellished villas crown the landscape scene,
Farms wave with gold and orchards blush between.
There shall tall spires and dome-capt towers ascend,
And piers and quays their massy structures blend;
While with each breeze approaching vessels glide,
And northern treasures dance on every tide.'
Then ceas'd the Nymph—tumultuous echoes roar,
And Joy's loud voice was heard from shore to shore;
Her graceful steps descending press'd the plain,
And Peace and Art and Labour join'd the train."[1]

New South Wales first colonised, 1788.

In truth it required no ordinary seer to predict the rise of British Australia from the seed sown in 1788, when Port Jackson was founded in Botany Bay as a penal settlement for British criminals. The early governors of New South Wales were, of necessity, military despots. In 1805 Captain William Bligh was appointed—"Bread-fruit Bligh" as he was called, from having sailed with Cook in his second voyage round the world, when bread-fruit was first found in Otaheite. He had been commander of the exploring

[1] The above lines are not included in Erasmus Darwin's published works. Better known is the singular accuracy with which he foretold the development of steam power and the advent of aviation.

"Soon shall thine arm, Unconquered Steam, afar
Drag the slow barge and drive the rapid car;
Or on wide waving wings expanded bear
The flying chariot through the fields of air.
Fair crews, triumphant, leaning from above,
Shall wave their flutt'ring kerchiefs as they move;
Or warrior-bands alarm the gaping crowd,
And armies shrink beneath the shadowy cloud."

These lines occur in *The Botanic Garden*, published in 1789, fifteen years before Trevithick first made a steam-carriage to run upon rails, and more than a hundred years before the internal combustion engine was applied to aeronautics. Byron condemned *The Botanic Garden* as "pompous rhyme; the scenery is its sole recommendation."

ship *Bounty* in 1787, when the crew mutinied and sent him adrift with eighteen others in an open boat, which he successfully navigated, without a chart, for 3618 miles, landing eventually upon an island off the east coast of Java.[1] Bligh's rule in Sydney proved too drastic for the taste of that little community. In January 1808 Major Johnston of the 102nd Foot[2] had him deposed and imprisoned, and established a provisional government. In the following year Colonel Macquarie was sent out with his regiment, the 73rd Highlanders, to assume the governorship and restore order. Bligh was released and promoted rear-admiral; Johnston was tried and cashiered.

Lachlan Macquarie, a hard-headed though choleric Scot, proved a capable dictator, and had the sense to confirm much of the reform effected by the provisional government.

"I found the colony," he reported, "barely emerging from infantile imbecility, and suffering various privations and disabilities; the country impenetrable beyond forty miles from Sydney, agriculture in a languishing state, commerce in its earliest dawn, revenue unknown, threatened with famine, distracted with factions; the public buildings in a state of dilapidation and mouldering to decay; the population in general depressed by poverty; no public credit or private confidence; the morals of the great mass of the population in the lowest state of debasement, and religious worship almost totally neglected."

Throughout his administration, which lasted till 1821, Macquarie made the redemption of the convicts his first care. Good behaviour ensured a ticket-of-leave and profitable employment; time-expired convicts were entitled to claim a grant of 30 acres of agricultural land. Considering the severity of British criminal law at this period and the comparatively slight offences which entailed transportation, this system cannot be deemed other than enlightened. Macquarie's doctrine was that, once a convict had served his time, he should have a fresh start on equal

[1] The mutineers took possession of Pitcairn Island, where their descendants by Tahitian mothers still exist, numbering something over one hundred, reduced by isolation and close intermarriage to a low intellectual grade.

[2] A regiment which had been raised within the colony.

terms with any free man. This being far ahead of the opinion current a hundred years ago, Geoffrey Bent, the first judge of the Supreme Court of New South Wales, refused to allow convict solicitors to practise in the Court, and was recalled in consequence; but when Macquarie appointed a convict named Redfern to be a magistrate, there came a severe reprimand from the Colonial Office.

Besides being a warm philanthropist, Macquarie was a diligent road and bridge maker. He laid out Sydney, and, having plenty of convict labour at command, raised many public buildings both there and in Tasmania, which had been settled from Sydney six years before his arrival. When he left Australia in 1821, the white population numbered about 30,000, of which three-fourths were, or had been convicts.[1] The names Lachlan and Macquarie occurring so frequently on the maps of New South Wales and Tasmania, commemorate the energetic dictator whose ambition was to be esteemed the father of the colony. But that title is more generally accorded to another Scot, John Macarthur (1767–1834), who exchanged an ensigncy in the 68th Foot for a lieutenancy in the 102nd or New South Wales Regiment. Retiring in 1804, he received a grant of 10,000 acres, and, having found the climate most favourable to the growth of fine wool, spared no effort or expense in obtaining the best strains of sheep. By introducing the merino breed in 1813, and establishing a stud flock at his farm, Camden, he laid the foundation of what has been developed into an immense industry and export trade.[2] In 1840 New South Wales was struck off the list of convict settlements, and the discovery of gold in 1851 gave such an impetus to prosperity and attracted such a large population, that representative government was conferred upon this and other Australian communities.[3] In the same year

Foundation of sheep farming in Australia, 1805.

[1] The population in June 1909 was 1,626,590, of which 4287 were aborigines of pure blood.

[2] Wool to the value of £4,648,648 was exported to the United Kingdom alone in 1908–9, and leather, frozen meat, hides and tallow to the aggregate value of £2,149,978.

[3] The total value of minerals raised in 1908–9 was £8,384,149, whereof £954,854 represents gold and £3,353,093 coal.

the Port Phillip district of New South Wales was proclaimed a separate colony with its own legislature. It had then a population of 97,000; which has increased to 1,273,000, including 650 aborigines. Victoria has proved richer in gold than the mother colony, having produced in fifty-seven years—1851–1908—upwards of seventy million ounces, valued at £282,321,433.

Victoria proclaimed a colony, 1851.

South Australia, an enormous tract seven times and a half more extensive than the British Isles, was proclaimed a colony 28th December 1836. Convict settlement had no part in originating this province. In 1832 the South Australian Association applied for a charter to exploit the territory, with powers of self-government; but this was at first refused in the supposed interest of New South Wales, which it was thought might suffer through competition with a community enjoying free institutions. But a charter was granted in 1836, constituting South Australia a colony under commissioners appointed by the Crown; which charter had to be suspended in 1841 owing to financial embarrassment caused by the extravagant public expenditure of Governor Gawler, a veteran of the famous Light Brigade in the Peninsula. South Australia was then administered as a Crown Colony until it received a free constitution in 1851. By that time the discovery of rich copper mines had solved the financial difficulty; and although the rush to the gold-fields in the eastern provinces threatened at first to draw away all the able-bodied population, the situation was saved by the greatly enhanced demand and price for agricultural produce to supply the gold-miners.

South Australia proclaimed a colony, 1836.

Queensland, covering an area of 670,500 square miles (five times that of the United Kingdom), formed the Moreton Bay district of New South Wales until 1859, when it was proclaimed a separate colony with representative government. Of all the Australian provinces Queensland has been developed most rapidly. When the first governor went out there in 1860, he found a white population of about 20,000, and

Queensland proclaimed a colony, 1859.

had to administer a paltry revenue of £6475. The population in fifty years has risen to 558,237, and the revenue to £4,608,956.

Tasmania proclaimed a colony, 1825.

In Tasmania, known as Van Diemen's Land till 1853, we have another offshoot from the mother colony New South Wales, Lieutenant Bowen having been sent there with a number of convicts in 1804. The first settlers had a trying time with the cannibal natives, who have been completely exterminated, the last individual, a woman, dying in 1876. Tasmania was proclaimed a separate colony in 1825.

Western Australia exceeds every other British colony in area except the Dominion of Canada, its total area being nearly one million square miles, whereof the greater part is dense forest or waterless desert. Nevertheless it has tracts of great fertility and much mineral wealth. The first settlers were a party of convicts, numbering with their military escort seventy-five souls, who were sent there from Sydney in 1825. Major Lockyer, commanding the party, took formal possession in the name of George IV. A free settlement on the Swan River followed in 1827, and in 1829 the convicts were sent back to Botany Bay. A colonising company having been formed, the Government made grants of land to the shareholders in proportion to their investments and to the number of emigrants they took out.[1] Captain Stirling was appointed the first Lieutenant-Governor in 1829; the physical difficulties of the country proved almost fatal to the enterprise; the colony had a hard struggle for solvency; it was depleted of labour, the primary requisite for development, by many of the early settlers leaving in despair of making a livelihood. The difficulty was solved by the colony offering to receive convicts. These began to arrive in 1850, and continued to do so until 1868 in drafts from the other stations, notwithstanding the repeal of the Transportation Act in 1853.[2] Thrown upon its own resources, Western Australia has made rapid progress since that time. Extensive grazing

Settlement of West Australia, 1825–27.

[1] Mr. Peel's grant was 250,000 acres; Colonel Latour's, 103,000.

[2] See vol. ii. pp. 218, 219.

tracts have been discovered, and the forest wealth has been turned to account.[1]

Captain Cook took formal possession of New Zealand in 1769 in the name of George III., but nothing was heard of those magnificent islands after his last visit in 1777 till the Rev. Samuel Marsden started missionary work there in 1814. The Maoris were then fierce cannibals, but, having no religion of their own, they proved easy converts for Marsden and his successors, Protestant and Roman Catholic, so that by the middle of the century the native population, as a whole, were professing Christians. No such wholesale success for the Gospel has taken place since the days of the primitive Church. In this instance colonisation followed closely upon the Cross, and in 1840 the chiefs assembled and, by the treaty of Waitingi, acknowledged the sovereignty of Queen Victoria and consented to the purchase of land by British settlers. All went well during Sir George Grey's governorship from 1845 to 1853. That able administrator must be revered as the founder of the Dominion of New Zealand, so admirably did he reconcile the interests of the Maori population with those of the new-comers. Disagreement about land broke out between them so soon as his wise administration came to an end; the Maoris took alarm at the growing preponderance of white settlers; a disputed sale gave rise to a conspiracy to expel the British from the country; several settlers were murdered, and troops had to be sent to restore order. The insurrection spreading, Governor Gore Browne was recalled,[2] and Sir George Grey, at that time Governor of the Cape Colony, was sent back to New Zealand. After full inquiry, he reported that it was his "settled conviction" that in the original dispute the Maoris were in the right, and he issued a proclamation to that effect, announcing that the purchase

Annexation of New Zealand, 1840.

[1] The exports of timber and sandalwood in 1908–9 were valued at £889,259.

[2] "I am far indeed from ascribing this untoward course of events to those who are responsible for the conduct of affairs in New Zealand. On the contrary, I recognise with pleasure the sound and impartial judgment, the integrity, intelligence and anxiety for the public good which have characterised your government of the colony for nearly six years." (Duke of Newcastle (Colonial Secretary) to Colonel Gore Browne, May 1864.)

of land on the Waitara River to which objection had been taken would not be proceeded with. But matters had gone too far; the Maoris would not lay down their arms, and in the desultory warfare which continued until 1866, the British troops suffered at least one reverse.[1] Even after Grey proclaimed peace on 3rd July 1866, the chief Te Kooti continued in rebellion, and several massacres of white men were perpetrated. It was not until January 1870 that the last British troops could be withdrawn. Since these troubles subsided relations between the Maoris and the Colonial Government have been perfectly friendly. No approximate impression could be given of the rapid rise of British rule in the Southern Pacific, or of the magnitude of commerce in these dependencies, in such a skeleton sketch as that which I have attempted unless it were exorbitantly punctuated with statistics. In recording the rate of an infant's growth one cannot dispense with the scales and tape. But whereas such statistics may be studied in any good almanack, it may suffice here to cast a few figures into tabular form.

War with the Maoris, 1860–69.

Colony.	Population in 1909.	Revenue 1907–8.	Public Debt 1908.	Imports 1907–8.	Exports 1907–8.
		£	£	£	£
New South Wales	1,626,590[2]	13,625,071	90,307,419	37,642,746	40,985,759
Victoria . . .	1,273,313[3]	8,314,180	53,180,487	27,197,696	27,196,201
South Australia .	403,819	3,654,666	29,985,858	11,231,470	13,778,534
Queensland . . .	558,237	4,608,956	39,568,827	9,471,166	12,194,977
Tasmania . . .	185,824	934,405	1,039,770	3,374,862	4,030,766
Western Australia	275,267	3,816,271	21,951,753	6,178,197	9,518,020
New Zealand . .	1,029,417[4]	9,001,185	70,938,534	17,471,284	16,317,494
Totals for the Commonwealth of Australia and the Dominion of New Zealand	5,252,467	44,454,734	306,962,648	112,564,421	124,021,751

Such statistics, however edifying they may be, are barren of light upon a grave aspect of the case which may not be shirked by any candid chronicler. The reduction of

[1] At Tauranga, 29th April 1864, the British assault was repulsed with a loss of 4 officers killed and 10 wounded, 25 privates killed and 72 wounded.

[2] Including 4287 aborigines.

[3] Including 652 aborigines. In 1851 there were about 15,000.

[4] Including 47,731 Maoris.

the native race in Australia to a dwindling remnant, and its total extinction in Tasmania, are facts upon which the most ardent imperialist cannot reflect with satisfaction. Like the Maoris of New Zealand, the Australians are reckoned as being of a homogeneous Polynesian stock, but, unlike that fine people, they have proved unequal to surviving contact with a civilisation presenting itself with the waters of baptism in one hand and ardent spirits in the other. The dealings of the first British settlers in those far-off lands in those far-off days lie behind a veil which may not be drawn aside; but, conflict and conquest apart, it is easy to understand how slight were the moral and hygienic restraints upon a white community chiefly composed of convicts guarded by soldiers, with a fluctuating admixture of sailors, and how deadly were the effects of imported disease upon the black population. Macquarie and Macarthur, fathers of the colony, were themselves of a race that had been ousted by a stronger one. The Teuton prevailed widely over the Celt in western Europe; but rough handling only forced the Celts to recede until milder conditions enabled them to reassert themselves and to blend by intermarriage with their conquerors. No such honourable admixture was open to the dark Australian race; and the native population having proved impervious to civilisation, has been obliterated through agencies, let us hope, as far beyond the control of our people as of themselves.

> "They are but phantoms now: their day is done.
> They lived and loved and died, and now are dust—
> Shadows, and passed into their shadowy land,
> Whence there is no return. This is long past;
> Yet not so very long but that a breath—
> A dreamy memory of them—lingers still
> On air that once they breathed."

In New Zealand the prospect is far from being so sinister. The Maoris, albeit of the same Polynesian stock as the Australians, are of far superior intellectual plasticity, adapting themselves readily to European education. Their numbers appear to be about stationary, varying between 40,000 and 50,000 in the last forty years. Occupying chiefly the northern island, they have enjoyed since 1840

guarantee of undisturbed possession of their lands and equal rights with their British fellow-subjects. All the professions are open to them, and they return four members to the Legislative Assembly of eighty.

Cape Colony ceded to Great Britain, 1815.

It has been shown in earlier chapters how British dominion in South Africa had to pass through a far more stormy youth than that of the Australasian colonies. It was the Portuguese navigator Bartolomeo Diaz who first discovered the Cape of Good Hope in 1486, and involuntarily doubled it, having been driven out of his course by gales, which were so violent as to cause him to name it Cabo Tormentoso—the Stormy Cape. No attempt at a settlement was made until the Dutch had succeeded the Portuguese as rulers of the ocean.[1] The Dutch East India Company founded a small colony there in 1652, and matters followed the usual course when civilisation comes in contact with primitive races. Concessions by Hottentot chiefs caused inevitable disputes between their people and the colonists; gradually the native race was killed out or doomed to slavery. By the middle of the eighteenth century the Dutch had occupied the whole Hottentot territory and, crossing the Gamtoos River, which formed their frontier on the east, came into conflict with a far more warlike nation, the Kaffres. In 1795 the settlers had spread themselves about two hundred miles inland to the Great Fish River; in that year, harassed by oppressive taxation, they endeavoured to follow the example of the British colonies in North America, and set up for themselves as a republic. By this time the importance of Cape Town, as lying on the fairway to India, had been well established, and the British Government, determined that it should not pass into the hands of an unfriendly power (and all republican powers were then written off as unfriendly), sent a fleet and occupied the colony in the name and on behalf of the Prince of Orange. The Netherlands Government being in no condition to maintain their authority over a colony in revolt, the Cape was administered by British governors till the Peace of Amiens in 1802,

[1] The British flag was hoisted in Table Bay by Captain Shillinge in 1620, but King James I. refused to sanction the act.

when it was handed back to the Dutch,[1] only to be retaken by Sir David Baird in January 1806, after war had broken out again in Europe, for Holland was then a French province. On the restoration of the House of Orange the Cape Colony was finally ceded to Great Britain after the peace in 1815. Five years later five thousand British emigrants landed in Algoa Bay, on the eastern frontier of the colony, and founded what are now the thriving towns of Grahamstown and Port Elizabeth. The friction between the Dutch Boers and the British settlers, resulting in the "Great Trek" and the foundation of the republics of the Transvaal and the Orange Free State, has been referred to elsewhere; but the expansion of the colony could not be effected without coming into conflict with the native black races. Apart altogether from the mere acquisition of territory by purchase or agreement, and from such causes for hostilities as breach of contract or attacks upon tribes under British protection, passive acquiescence in the prevalence of nameless cruelties and human sacrifice in countries bordering upon British territory has always been found impossible. The native system of rule in South Africa was an organised system of rapine. Black rulers, however much they might be disposed individually for peace, were powerless to control their indunas and young braves when they claimed the right to "wash their spears." Hence British troops have been repeatedly employed in the defence of Cape Colony or of tribes under British protection, such defence invariably leading to extension of territory.

The phenomena of empire-building remain the same from age to age; the contact of civilised nations with barbarians brings about similar results. When Ostorius Scapula, *bello egregius*, took over command of the small Roman province in Britain in A.D. 49, he found that the Icenians were raiding the lands of neighbouring tribes subject to Rome. He organised a punitive expedition and, having overturned Icenian authority, found it necessary to prevent their territory becoming a hive of cut-throat robbers by annexing the whole country between the Hampshire

[1] See vol. i. p. 34.

Avon and the Severn.[1] Again in A.D. 58, when Suetonius Paulinus occupied Anglesea, he caused the sacred groves of the Druids to be cut down, because of the sanguinary rites performed therein;[2] just as Sir Garnet Wolseley in 1873 found it necessary to destroy Kumassi because of the bloody abominations practised as part of King Kofi Kalkali's system of government. If the extension of British dominion in southern and equatorial Africa requires justification, it is supplied in the deliverance of native races from inhuman tyranny. The misery is only aggravated when the colonising power is a weak one. There is no reason to believe that the late King Leopold of the Belgians was actuated by heartless selfishness when he annexed the Congo region. M. Emile Vandervelde, than whom nobody has condemned the result of that annexation more severely, credits him at the outset with a genuine desire to redeem the natives from the horrible and sanguinary tyranny under which, in common with most Negroid peoples, they suffered.[3] But the Belgian occupation had not endured ten years before the utter incapacity of the Belgian Government to control the action of its officials in Africa became manifest, and the whole of that splendid Congo region became the theatre of unbridled avarice and sickening cruelty.

Kaffraria, a term now obsolete, was used to designate all that vast territory lying to the north-east of Cape Colony between the Orange River and the Limpopo. The name Káfir, applied by Mohammedans to all people of other religions in the same sense as Christians speak of heathens, was found in use by the earliest Portuguese settlers on the east coast of Africa to denote the Negroid tribes inhabiting the country. They are of a different race from the aboriginal Hottentots and Bosjesmans, and, being far superior to them in physique and intellect, drove them out or extinguished them, just as the Dutch settlers did in Cape Colony.

With these warlike tribes, collectively known as Kaffres, the British had to wage several wars. In 1811 Colonel Graham drove them beyond the Fish River. A more serious

[1] Tacitus, *Annals*, xii. 30. [2] Ibid., xiv. 30.
[3] *La Belgique et le Congo*, par Emile Vandervelde.

campaign had to be undertaken in 1818–19, resulting in a large annexation of territory to the colony. War broke out again in 1834, when 10,000 Kaffres invaded Cape Colony and destroyed a great deal of property before Colonel (afterwards Sir Harry) Smith forced them back in a campaign lasting nine months. By a treaty of peace, dated 17th September 1835, the British frontier was advanced to the Kei River; but Lord Glenelg, then at the Colonial Office, disallowed the extension, and the colonists were instructed to adopt conciliatory measures towards the Kaffres. It proved difficult to keep the peace with these restless neighbours, and in 1846, owing to the Kaffres refusing to give up one who had murdered a British subject, war was declared for the fourth time, and, at its conclusion in 1848, all the land up to the Kei River was annexed. The last and most sanguinary of these wars broke out suddenly shortly before Christmas 1850, when isolated detachments of British troops were severely handled before Sir Harry Smith could send reinforcements to the front. Even so, it was not until March 1853 that the Kaffres were finally subdued, and British Kaffraria, which had been set apart as a reserve for their occupation, was erected into a Crown colony, to be afterwards incorporated in Cape Colony in 1865.

Kaffre Wars, 1811–53.

The annexation of the Transvaal in 1877, the war with the Zulu-Kaffres in 1879, and the retrocession of the Transvaal in 1881, having been discussed in the fourth chapter of this volume, we resume here the general course of events in South Africa. Hitherto agriculture, chiefly pastoral, and wine-making, had been the principal industries in the South African colonies; but Gladstone had dealt a deadly blow to the wine business in his budget of 1860. Previously to that, Cape wines paid only 2s. 10d. a gallon import duty in Great Britain, as against 5s. 6d. a gallon levied on continental wines. This preference to colonial over foreign produce, natural and statesmanlike though it was, offended the prejudice of ministers infatuated about free trade. *Laissez faire* was the watchword; the imperial spirit never was at a lower ebb; the colonies might swim with us or "cut the painter," as they chose; so the duty on French

wines was lowered to an equality with that on colonial wines. The punishment on the Cape Colony was sudden and severe. Exportation fell from 1,100,000 gallons to 500,000, and a few years later a visitation of rinderpest, or Asiatic cattle murrain, caused heavy losses in the farming industry. Cotton-growing had been started in Natal, the export of that material rising from 35,000 lb. in 1864 to 235,000 lb. in 1871; but the scarcity, fitfulness and high price of labour forbade great expectations from that source. No one suspected that beneath the surface of the veldt lay treasure beyond the dreams of avarice.

In March 1869 a Griqua shepherd, tending his flock near the Orange River, picked up a clear white stone, which turned out to be a beautiful diamond of 83 carats. The story got wind; a prospecting party set out from Natal in November, and soon discovered a bank of gravel rich with the precious stones. Then came a rush of diggers from Natal, Cape Town, and Australia into the Transvaal and Orange Free State. In vain the republican authorities strove to keep them out by granting monopoly of prospecting to three individuals; the miners laughed at the proclamations and established a republic of their own, which was soon swelled by thousands from all parts of the world after the extraordinary richness of the deposit had been proved. Such was the origin of the Kimberley diamond mines.

Discovery of diamonds, 1869.

Among the early comers to this land of promise was a lean lank youth of eighteen, who had joined his brother in trying to make cotton-growing pay in Natal. Cecil John Rhodes was the fifth son of a clergyman of the Church of England, and little as his appearance and antecedents betokened it, he was soon to become a power in the Empire. Work at the mines was hard, but healthy; industry was sure of a reward, and it was not many months before Rhodes had gained as much as would have bought his father's advowson many times over. But his great chance came in 1874, when the law limiting each miner to the possession of a single claim was repealed, in consequence of the failure of many of the single claim holders to contend with falls of reef, inunda-

Cecil John Rhodes, 1853–1902.

tion, and other difficulties. There were two men on the spot who, perceiving the necessity for regulating the output and amalgamating interests, never let an opportunity slip of buying up a claim. Of these two, Isaac Barnett founded the Central Kimberley Mining Company in 1880, and Rhodes that of the De Beers Company in the same year. Before that, in 1877, President Brand of the Orange Free State, recognising his inability either to keep the miners out or to maintain order among them when they were in, had surrendered for a payment of £90,000 all claim on the part of his Government to administer the Kimberley district, which then passed under British jurisdiction.

After the retrocession of the Transvaal in 1881, it became clear that the Boer Government were not going to rest content with what they had gained. Their President, Paul Krüger, was a ruler of great ability and tenacity of purpose: his dream was a single Boer Republic reaching from Table Bay to the Equator. Rhodes, who entered the Cape Parliament in 1880, had his dream also, similar in magnitude to Krüger's, but with a difference in the flag. All his energy, which was inexhaustible—all his wealth, which became enormous—all his influence with native chiefs and their people, which was unrivalled—were applied to one end, to make British authority supreme in South Africa, and to open up the whole of it to British settlers. Rhodes was unscrupulous in the means whereby he sought to attain his ends. In 1888, by a payment of £10,000, he bought off the troublesome criticism of the Irish members at Westminster upon the projected charter to the Rhodesian Company. Three years later, being then Prime Minister of Cape Colony, as there was a prospect of the early return of the Liberals to office in England, he sent their chief agent, Mr. Schnadhorst, a cheque for £5000, with the admonition—"I hope you will, with the extreme caution that is necessary, help in guiding your party to consider politics other than those of England."[1] Valuing money only as an engine of power, his own mode of life was simple almost to austerity, and he was heedless as to the purity of the hands into which he thrust his cheques,

[1] Michell's *Life of Cecil Rhodes*, ii. 47.

provided they could minister to his purpose. Of the grandeur and disinterested nature of that purpose there can be no question. Here it is in his own words:

"I have ever held but one view, that is, the government of South Africa by the people of South Africa, with the Imperial flag for defence. I am not desirous to interfere with the freedom of the Transvaal, but the Cape Colony must hold the keys of the interior, and must and shall be the dominant State in South Africa."[1]

Krüger's purpose was equally clear and legitimate, and he was equally unscrupulous in the manner of forwarding it. He wished to begin by confederating with the Orange Free State, and thereby acquiring Basutoland, both of which England had ceded in 1854. Failing to persuade President Brand to agree to that, he turned his attention to the west, where feuds were raging between rival chiefs in consequence of the withdrawal of British authority. If this chronic disturbance, which Krüger actively fomented, should give him a plausible pretext for annexing Bechuanaland, his object in barring the advance of the British to the north would be in fair process of fulfilment. His designs in this direction were thwarted by the High Commissioner, Sir Hercules Robinson, who promptly proclaimed the annexation of Bechuanaland, and appointed a British resident, supported by a hundred mounted police.

Annexation of Bechuanaland, 12th March 1884.

Meanwhile, within Krüger's own dominion had been taking place that which was so powerfully to affect the future of the Republic. Alluvial gold had been worked in the Transvaal for many years with moderate success, but in 1886 was discovered the conglomerate series of the Witwatersrand, wherein was gold in extraordinary abundance. There followed an immense inrush of prospectors, and the foundation of the town of Johannesburg.

Opening of the Witwatersrand Goldfield, 1886.

The scramble for African land was now at a feverish height. President Brand of the Orange Free State died in 1888. He had always declined Krüger's overtures for

[1] Speech to his constituents, October 1886.

alliance offensive and defensive, being unwilling to lead his State into complications through the ambitious policy of the Transvaal President. But Brand's successor, Reitz, had no such scruples; and on 9th March 1889 a treaty was signed at Potchefstroom binding either Republic to support the other in defence of its independence. Ten years were to run before this fateful agreement was to bear its full fruit, involving in the fate of the Transvaal the State which Brand had so presciently striven to shield from such entanglement. Immediately he had secured the treaty, Krüger turned his attention northward, where Lo Bengula, the powerful and warlike ruler of the Matabele, held sway over a rich expanse of country, with his capital at Bulawayo. Rhodes beat Krüger in the race by a short head, his partner Mr. Rudd obtaining on behalf of the British South Africa Company an exclusive concession from Lo Bengula of all mineral rights within his dominion.

Lo Bengula's concession, 30th Oct. 1888.

Lo Bengula was overlord of the unwarlike Mashona tribe as well as chief of the fiery Matabele. In competing for possession of Mashonaland, Rhodes had Portugal and Germany for rivals, as well as the Transvaal Boers. Once let any one of the three powers acquire a footing in Lo Bengula's territory, and the project which Rhodes always kept before him of an open trade route to the north would be wrecked for ever. The Portuguese were known to be preparing an armed expedition on the east; fifteen hundred Boers had engaged to trek from the south into Mashonaland; while as to Germany, England's latest and most formidable trade rival, a brief sketch of her rise as a South African power is necessary to make the position clear.

As early as 1842 German missionaries established a station in Namaqualand, on the west coast of South Africa, access thereto lying through Walfisch Bay, which was regarded as a British possession, and was the only operative harbour on 800 miles of coast between the Portuguese territory of Angola and the Orange River. The business of missionaries is to preach peace and ensue it; but they also create trade, and conflict is the invariable corollary of trade with primitive races.

Germany in South Africa, 1842–85.

In 1868, after the missionaries had got into trouble with the natives, the Prussian Government invoked and obtained from the British Government assurances of protection for German settlers in Damara and Namaqualand; thereby implying that these regions, hitherto not even nominally British, at least lay within the sphere of British influence. This inference was confirmed by the British Government undertaking to give German missionaries and traders the same protection as was given to British subjects. In 1878 Walfisch Bay, with fifteen miles of the adjacent coast, was formally annexed to the British Empire, but neither Beaconsfield's Government nor Gladstone's succeeding it would yield to Sir Bartle Frere's urgent recommendation that sovereignty should be proclaimed over the whole of Damara and Namaqualand. This might have been done without offence to any European power; but no minister of any party was anxious to extend the limits and responsibility of the Empire. The German Government vainly tried to induce Lord Granville to take possession of that vast region, appealing to him in 1880, 1881 and again in 1883 for definite assurance that Germans might rely upon British protection therein. While my lords Granville and Derby [1] were writing reams of dilatory and colourless despatches, a German merchant, Herr Lüderitz, organised an expedition, and, landing at Angra Pequena, about 280 miles south of Walfisch, in May 1883, obtained a concession of 215 square miles from a native chief, with ten miles of sea frontage, and hoisted the German flag. Next came a couple of German war vessels, and it was notified to the commander of a British gunboat that he must consider himself in German territorial waters.

Thus far there was no aggressive intent. Bismarck was always averse from embarking upon colonial expansion, and the German authorities were only doing for the protection of their countrymen what the British Government had shirked the invitation to do. But by this time the Cape Government had woke up to the value of Angra

[1] The German Government declined to recognise communications coming direct from Lord Derby as Colonial Secretary, holding, as was strictly correct, that the Foreign Secretary was the only minister entitled to correspond with foreign Powers.

Pequena, to which hitherto they had attached no importance whatever. It was one thing to decline the liabilities involved in assuming sovereignty over a vast seaboard and hinterland, and quite another thing to see a rival acquiring the same. On 3rd June 1883 the Cape Premier informed the German Consul at Cape Town that his Government was going to take possession of Angra Pequena. But Bismarck by this time had lost patience with Granville's shilly-shally.[1] The German ambassador, Count Münster, told Granville straight that he must not reckon any longer upon German support in Egypt unless Great Britain showed more friendliness in colonial matters. Brought thus sharply to book, Granville gave in at once, informing Münster on 22nd June that her Majesty's Government recognised German sovereignty in Angra Pequena. Nor was this the only matter upon which Granville had to yield with what dignity he might retain. Bismarck positively refused to recognise a treaty already signed between Great Britain and Portugal establishing moderate tariffs upon goods imported into the Congo, and the treaty was torn up accordingly on the 26th. In August following the whole coast from the Orange River northwards to the Portuguese boundary, together with the hinterland, except the fifteen miles at Walfisch Bay, were proclaimed to be German territory.

At the beginning of 1885 fourteen years had passed since the unification of the German Empire, during which period German industries, stimulated by a high protective tariff, had expanded beyond the requirements of the home and continental markets and caused manufacturers to agitate for fresh outlets for trade under the flag. Bismarck had thereby become a convert to colonial enterprise, and on 9th January 1885 made a notable speech in the Reichsrath, containing a thinly-veiled threat to England that, unless she was prepared to pay in kind for friendship, she might find the German Empire among her adversaries. *Do ut des* was the principle he advised Granville to follow, the *i*'s being dotted, and the *t*'s crossed by the *Cologne Gazette* next day. "It is most desirable that England should be persuaded in a friendly way to cede Walfisch

[1] Fitzmaurice's *Life of Earl Granville*, ii. 352, 353.

Bay to Germany. . . . The small service which England thereby would do to Germany might easily be made up to her by diplomatic favours in other places." The reference, of course, was to Egypt, which Bismarck had strongly urged both Beaconsfield and Gladstone to annex once and for all.[1]

The Egyptian lever was undoubtedly a powerful one, and it might have wrenched Walfisch Bay out of Granville's not very masculine grasp, had there not been provided a field for concession in another part of the world. In 1883 the Government of Queensland, apprised of the intention of Germany to colonise Papua or New Guinea, a huge island connecting Australia with the Indian Archipelago, sent a police magistrate to take possession thereof in the name of the Queen. This act was disallowed by the British Government, who expressed disbelief in the rumours about the intentions of Germany. Great dissatisfaction was caused thereby in all the Australian colonies, all of which were represented at a conference held in Melbourne to call upon the mother country to annex New Guinea as a reasonable measure of protection. With this request the Cabinet complied, by deciding to proclaim a protectorate over the whole island, except the north-western portion already occupied by the Dutch. But a growl from Bismarck caused Granville and Derby to limit annexation to the coast region nearest Australia, a decision which brought upon them sharp disapproval from some of their colleagues in the Cabinet, and greatly incensed the Australians. Childers, at this time Chancellor of the Exchequer, having held high office in the Government of Victoria, 1852–57, was specially apprehensive of the effect which this surrender of territory might have upon Australian loyalty.[2]

But Gladstone overruled all objections;[3] part of the

[1] Bismarck denied afterwards that he had ever given that advice, but see Blowitz's *Memoirs*, p. 166.

[2] "The Colonial Office and Childers are very strong that we must not irritate the Australians in this matter." (Granville to Gladstone, 30th September 1884.)

[3] "I do hope that you are pressing forward the 'Pauncefote' settlement of the north coast of New Guinea. . . . It is really impossible to exaggerate the importance of *getting out of the way the bar to* the Egyptian settlement. These words, strong as they are, are in my opinion the words of truth and soberness; as, if we cannot wind up at once these small colonial controversies, we shall, before we are many weeks older, find it to our cost." (Gladstone to Granville, 6th March 1885.)

price of Bismarck's neutrality in Egypt was a large concession of territory to Germany in New Guinea and the neighbouring islands. Further, the British Government acquiesced in their occupation of the Cameroons and the Samoan Islands, whereby the German flag was hoisted in the middle of the British sphere of Fiji.

On 29th October 1889 the British South Africa Company received a Royal Charter, the Irish party in the Imperial Parliament having been "squared" by Rhodes's cheque for £10,000 already referred to.[1] All through that year Rhodes had been urging upon the High Commissioner, Sir Henry Loch,[2] and the Cape and Imperial governments the necessity in British interests of occupying Mashonaland before it passed into the keeping of another power; but it was not till June 1890 (the South African midwinter) that the necessary consents had been obtained, and a column of about a thousand picked men set out under command of Colonel Pennefather upon a march of 400 miles. Lo Bengula warned Pennefather against entering his territory, and an attack was daily expected, but it never came. On 11th September the Union flag was hoisted where the town of Salisbury now stands, and a province of 73,000 square miles was quietly annexed to the British Empire.

Annexation of Mashonaland, 11th Sept. 1890.

Lo Bengula's personal acquiescence in this transaction had been secured by a subsidy to himself in the shape of a monthly payment of £100 and other grants; but, unwilling though he might be to forfeit such a handsome income, his people had no such inducement to abandon their regular business of raiding. That was, indeed, their traditional and habitual source of livelihood. So when they resumed this industry, killing, in the course of it, a number of harmless Mashonas, a tribe now under British protection, Lo Bengula found himself powerless to make amends or to restrain his people from further raids. The Chartered Company, therefore, had to undertake a punitive expedition. The com-

First Matabele War, Oct.–Nov. 1893.

[1] See p. 249, *supra*. It is not suggested that the Irish members benefited personally in the slightest degree by this payment. It was simply and solely a contribution to the war chest of the Home Rule party.

[2] Created Lord Loch 1895; died 1900.

bined forces of the Company and the Buchuanaland Border Police amounted only to about 1500 men, with native levies, but their machine guns and superior armament enabled them, on the 25th October and 1st November, to inflict such crushing defeat on the enemy that Lo Bengula caused his great kraal at Bulawayo to be burnt, and fled, never to be seen by white men again. His fate was harsh and undeserved, for he would have kept faith with the British if his people had allowed it. True, he was a sanguinary despot, the only kind of ruler recognised among South African tribes; when he inclined to live at peace with his neighbours, he found himself powerless to keep his people in hand.

Acquisition of Matabeleland, 1894.

On 18th July 1894, Lord Rosebery having succeeded Mr. Gladstone as Prime Minister, an Order in Council was issued vesting the government of Matabeleland in the Chartered Company. The territory thus annexed received in 1895 the official title of Rhodesia, a permanent tribute to the man whose bold imagination and resolute persistence brought it under the British flag.[1] The extent of this acquisition is equal to 711,000 square miles, or close upon six times the area of the United Kingdom.

Acquisition! The word carries a dubious import to the ears of some persons in these latter days. Unfortunately, an empire, once started, must either wax or wane. Outlets for British trade must be found and held, unless the people of the United Kingdom are to make their living as it has been alleged those of Scilly have to do.[2] It is not given to the human race to remain stationary. Were we to inquire closely into our own title to the British Isles, should we be able to show any closer kinship with the original inhabitants than the Matabele and Zulus, irruent from the north, could claim with the Hottentots and Bosjesmans whom they displaced? It would be comfortable to feel assured that the limits of British expansion had been reached, and that Rhodes had realised his ideal to the fullest extent

[1] Limits of space have interfered to preclude any mention of Rhodes's able lieutenants, Dr. Jameson and Mr. F. C. Selous, without whom he would have been powerless to carry out his project.

[2] By washing each other's clothes.

by the enormous additions he made to Queen Victoria's dominions.

"Other people besides myself have hobbies," he said at Cape Town in 1887. "Some are for collecting pictures or coins, or even butterflies; others for acquiring land or houses. I venture to think that mine is better than any of these. My aim in life is to secure a country by the nature of its soil and climate suitable for British occupation. This is what our country urgently needs, and I could have no greater happiness than to be the means of obtaining for Great Britain sufficient land for this purpose." [1]

Other people besides Rhodes had been at work in securing outlets for British trade and industry in the Dark Continent. Sir William Mackinnon, who started in life as a grocer's assistant in his native Campbeltown, went to India at the age of seven-and-twenty and, in partnership with his schoolfellow Robert Mackenzie, acquired a steamer for the coasting trade in the Bay of Bengal. Upon this modest foundation was built one of the greatest shipping companies under the British flag, and therefore in the world. The British India Steam Navigation Company was the means of creating an enormous trade in the Indian Ocean, in the South Pacific, and on the east coast of Africa. In 1878 Mackinnon obtained from the Sultan of Zanzibar the lease of a tract of about 590,000 square miles, with 1150 miles of sea coast, and comprising the great lakes of Nyasa, Tanganyika, and Victoria Nyanza. The Colonial Office, where Hicks-Beach had just succeeded the vacillating Carnarvon, was staggered by the dimensions of this transaction, and refused to sanction it. Ten years later the Conservative party was again in office; the Fair Trade movement had roused its leaders to some sense of the dangers threatening British commercial supremacy, and to the need for preserving open markets. A charter was granted to the British East Africa Company, whereof Mackinnon was chairman; but meanwhile the whole of the territory which he had offered the British Government in 1878 had passed under the German flag. The island of Zanzibar remained British,

Sir William Mackinnon, 1823–93.

The British East Africa Company, 1888–95.

[1] Michell's *Life of Cecil Rhodes*, i. 226.

and 150 miles of coast, including the fine harbour of Mombasa and an extensive hinterland, was secured to the company, and was sold by them to the British Government in 1895.

Although a great part of East and Equatorial Africa is now under the British flag, it is in the form of protectorates, not as regular colonies. These protectorates consist of Somaliland, extending to about 68,000 square miles; Uganda, 223,500 square miles; East Africa, 177,100 square miles; Zanzibar, 1020 square miles; Nyasaland, 40,980 square miles—in all about 510,600 square miles, rather more than four times the area of the United Kingdom.

CHAPTER XI

Affairs in the Transvaal—The Jameson raid—Parliamentary inquiry into the raid—Reconquest of the Soudan—Occupation of Dongola—Operations on the Atbara—Battle of Omdurman—The Nile Barrage—The Diamond Jubilee—The second Colonial Conference—Development of locomotion—John Loudon M'Adam—The Railway movement—Bicycling—Motor traffic—The Channel Tunnel scheme—Steam navigation—Graham Bell invents the telephone—Edison's phonograph—Wireless telegraphy established—Modern illuminants—Photography—Architecture in the nineteenth century—Literature—Modern journalism—Modern surgery—Vaccination.

Effodiuntur opes, irritamenta malorum. The whole range of literature might be searched in vain for a more truthful description than is contained in this well-worn line of the state of affairs brought about in the Transvaal Republic, and, through the Transvaal, in the British South African colonies, by the development of the gold and diamond mines described in the last chapter. It had come to pass that the great majority of the inhabitants of the Transvaal were Uitlanders, that is, foreigners, chiefly British, having no right as citizens of the Republic, but working claims under mining concessions. In other States, European and American, aliens may be naturalised after a prescribed period of residence; it was not so in the Transvaal. Once an Uitlander, always an Uitlander, was the law; the Boers wanted to keep the country to themselves, and President Krüger, with his dream of a Dutch South Africa from sea to sea, and his nightmare of British annexation, opposed an inflexible negative to every overture for a relaxation of that law. Nobody can question that Krüger and his people were technically within their rights in refusing citizenship to people of alien race; but, on the other hand, the Uitlander community claimed that, whereas the Transvaal Government had greatly enriched itself by mining concessions, it was bound to

Affairs in the Transvaal, 1895.

provide reasonable security and justice for those who produced the wealth of the country and paid nine-tenths of its taxes.[1] If, they argued, the Boers had wished to keep the country to themselves, they ought not to have leased their minerals to Uitlanders. Taxation without representation was grievous enough: it was rendered intolerable by the impossibility of obtaining civil justice. The case for the Uitlanders was concisely put by Rhodes when he was in England in 1895:—

"If I were President Krüger," said he, "I dare say I might not have given the Uitlanders the franchise, because that might have ended my own power. But I would have made my new population comfortable and given them justice. The law, as we know, is under the heel of the President. A judge gives a decision, and then a motion, slipped through the Raad, revokes it. Every concession—almost every piece of departmental business transacted, must be arranged with bribes."[2]

It was not in modern human nature to consent to live under such conditions. The Uitlanders therefore banded themselves together in 1892 as the Transvaal National Union, a deputation whereof waited on President Krüger on 1st September. "Go back," was the fierce old Boer's reply; "go back and tell your people I shall never give them anything; and now, let the storm burst!" Year after year the determination of the Boer Government became more clear to make the conditions intolerable to the Uitlanders. On 14th March 1895 an old law was revived and enforced prohibiting the circulation of foreign —that is, British—silver coin within the Transvaal. In August following the Uitlanders presented another petition to the Volksraad, setting forth their grievances. It was contemptuously rejected, one member of the Raad challenging the Uitlanders to "come and fight." In a wild country remote from the older civilisation and peopled by rival nationalities, the transition from words to blows is an easy one. The Boer Government were evidently contemplating

[1] The population of the city of Johannesburg, which originated with the mining community of the Witwatersrand in 1886, amounts at the present day to 155,000.

[2] Michell's *Life of Cecil Rhodes*, ii. 127.

the wholesale expulsion of aliens;[1] Uitlanders began removing their money to Cape Colony, and in December (African midsummer) women and children began to flock out of Johannesburg in search of safety. Cecil Rhodes, who was now Prime Minister of the Cape Parliament, strengthened the South Africa Police along the Transvaal border; Dr. Jameson, Administrator of Rhodesia, massed some of the Chartered Company's troops at Mafeking and Pitsani, and on 28th December received an urgent appeal to come to the help of the Uitlanders. There can be little doubt that all this had been concerted beforehand; that both Rhodes and Jameson were acting in the full knowledge that a rising of Uitlanders was to take place in Johannesburg, and had prepared for the Police and Chartered Company's troops striking in to protect women and children and support their countrymen.

The Jameson raid, 28th Dec. 1895–2nd Jan. 1896.

On Sunday, 28th December, Jameson crossed the frontier at the head of 400 or 500 mounted men and six Maxim guns, and marched on Johannesburg. He received a reinforcement at Pitsani; but on Tuesday he was overtaken by an order from Sir Hercules Robinson, the High Commissioner,[2] commanding him to return. Mr. Chamberlain had got wind of the intended raid, and had telegraphed to Robinson that it must be stopped at all hazards. Jameson, in whose eyes Rhodes was a far greater figure than either the Secretary of State or the High Commissioner, kept on his way, too loyal to his countrymen in Johannesburg to break tryst. But the conspiracy miscarried. Krüger, hearing of Jameson's approach, sent for the leaders of the Uitlanders' Reform Committee and promised that their grievances should be redressed. This caused such a division among them that no action was taken; they could not agree among themselves, and no force went out to meet Jameson, as had been arranged. On 1st January 1896 Jameson, unaware of what had happened in Johannesburg, received another order of recall, and treated it as he had done the first. Skirmishing

[1] A stringent law to this effect was passed by the Volksraad in the following October.

[2] Created Lord Rosmead in 1896.

had begun already; on that very day the British force attacked the Boers, who were entrenched in a strong position near Krügersdorp, and was repulsed. Next morning at five o'clock the Boers attacked the British, who made a dash for Johannesburg, fighting as they went. After three hours of this work they were compelled to halt at Doornkop, where they fought on for two hours more; and then seeing no sign of co-operation from Johannesburg, they surrendered, after the Boer commandant, Kronje, had given a written promise that their lives should be spared.[1]

No justification of this raid is possible. The Chartered Company had received the privilege of raising an armed force, as all such companies must do, for the protection of their territory against hostile native tribes. But to use it for the invasion of a friendly State (and the Transvaal was technically friendly, despite the demeanour and known intentions of Krüger's Government) was a gross breach of the law of nations. Nevertheless Dr. Jameson received an immense amount of sympathy in England; the Poet Laureate composed an ode in his honour, and enthusiasm for the raiders was raised to something like fervour by the publication of a telegram from the German Emperor to President Krüger, congratulating him warmly on having repelled the invasion "without appealing to the help of the friendly Powers"; the inference being, that if help had been asked it would have been forthcoming from Berlin.

Among the prisoners taken at Doornkop was Sir John Willoughby, who was a major in the Royal Horse Guards, and several others held commissions in the British army. They were tried under the Foreign Enlistment Act, and sentenced to various terms of imprisonment—in some cases to forfeiture of their commissions. Dr. Jameson was sentenced to fifteen months' imprisonment, but was shortly released on account of his broken health. The Uitlander leaders in Johannesburg were arraigned before Boer judges at Pretoria. Four of them—Mr. Lionel Phillips, Mr. Hays Hammond, Mr. (afterwards Sir George) Farrar, and Colonel Francis

[1] This condition was not known to Mr. Chamberlain when Krüger handed over his prisoners to be dealt with by the British authorities, and received a letter from Queen Victoria thanking him for his magnanimity.

Rhodes—were condemned to death, but the sentence was commuted, first to fifteen years' imprisonment, and then to a fine of £25,000 each. Fifty-nine others were fined £2000 each, to the payment whereof Cecil Rhodes contributed £62,000. He could scarcely do less. Dr. Jameson had been his cat's-paw in the affair, acting upon his secret instructions in arranging the raid. Rhodes owed far more to Jameson than money could ever repay. Jameson had given up a fine medical practice in Kimberley to further Rhodes's negotiations with Lo Bengula, and it is not too much to say that without Jameson's intervention Rhodes could never have become master of Rhodesia.

Rhodes resigned the premiership of the Cape Parliament immediately, and the question of his complicity in the raid was made the subject of searching inquiry before a Select Committee of the House of Commons. More than once in the present work I have felt compelled to comment upon the unsuitability of such a tribunal to deliver judgment upon questions powerfully affecting party feelings. Objection had been made and sustained on that ground to Parnell's demand for the appointment of a Select Committee to inquire into the complicity of himself and his colleagues with crime in Ireland; it is difficult to understand why the question of the complicity of Rhodes and the Chartered Company with the raid was not regarded in the same way. The evidence rested largely upon telegrams between Rhodes, Jameson, Rutherford Harris (secretary to the Chartered Company), and the journalist Miss Flora Shaw;[1] the laconic language of telegrams generally leaves something for the receiver to read into them. Obviously there was a danger that members of a parliamentary committee, untrained in the law of evidence, might involuntarily read into these telegrams what accorded best with their preconception of the case. There was current a shrewd impression that the Colonial Office had not been kept in complete ignorance of the preparations for the raid. At the head of the Colonial Office was Mr. Chamberlain, who was at that time the object of peculiar resentment and detestation to the

Parliamentary inquiry into the raid, 1896–97.

[1] Married Sir Frederick Lugard in 1902.

Radical party. It would have been a severe blow to the fair fame of the Unionist Ministry had the report of the committee implicated Chamberlain in such a grave transaction. Some of Miss Shaw's telegrams to Rhodes might be read as indicating foreknowledge of the raid on the part of the Colonial Office. For instance—

"Held an interview with Secretary Transvaal.[1] Left here on Saturday for Hague, Berlin, Paris. Fear negotiations with these parties. Chamberlain sound in case of interference European Powers, but have special reason to believe wishes you must do it immediately."

Now Miss Shaw was an active and enterprising journalist; when cross-examined before the committee, she explained that her business was to keep the *Times* supplied with information as to the course of events in South Africa, past, present, and to come. Asked what she meant by the expressions—"Chamberlain sound . . . wishes you must do it immediately," she said she intended to convey to Rhodes her estimate of what Chamberlain would do in the event of any European power interfering—an estimate based upon his public utterances, in which he had dwelt upon his determination that British authority should be paramount in South Africa.

The committee accepted Miss Shaw's explanation of this and other ambiguous expressions in her telegrams; they received without qualification Mr. Chamberlain's assurance that he had no foreknowledge of any plan for invading the Transvaal; and, despite the facts that Dr. Rutherford Harris had disappeared abroad and could not be found, although summoned as an important witness, and that Rhodes's solicitor, Mr. Hawkesley, refused to produce certain telegrams that had passed between him and Rhodes, on the ground that communications between a solicitor and his client are privileged—despite these facts, I say, and despite the admission previously made in the House of Commons by Mr. Chamberlain, "that everybody knew, even the man in the street, that there would be an insurrection in Johannesburg," the committee found that

[1] Dr. Leyds, whom Krüger had sent on a roving commission to enlist the sympathy of European governments.

"neither the Secretary of State for the Colonies, nor any of the officials of the Colonial Office, received any information which made them, or should have made them, or any of them, aware of the plot during its development." Even Mr. Labouchere, who drew up an alternative report, acquitted the Colonial Office and the High Commissioner of the degree of complicity in the raid which had been freely alleged against them; and the committee refrained from commenting upon the neglect of the Colonial Office to adopt such measures, when the rising in Johannesburg was known to be imminent and Rhodes was moving troops to the frontier, as would have made the raid impossible.

Upon Rhodes and his share in the raid the committee passed tolerably severe censure. He had been the first witness called before them (16th February 1897); he admitted having promoted the rising in Johannesburg, assisting the Uitlanders with money and advice; he had moved up the Mounted Police to within striking distance of Johannesburg, without informing the High Commissioner; but he declared that the actual raid took place without his authority. The committee reported that "whatever justification there might have been for action on the part of the people of Johannesburg, there was none for a person in Mr. Rhodes's position in subsidising, organising and stimulating an armed insurrection against the Government of the South African Republic, and employing the forces and resources of the Chartered Company to support such a revolution"; and, as to the raid, "although Dr. Jameson 'went in' without Mr. Rhodes's authority, it was always part of the plan that certain forces should be used in the Transvaal in the support of an insurrection."

The Radical members of the House of Commons were thoroughly dissatisfied with the report of the Select Committee. Convinced that there had been some collusion between the Liberal and Unionist leaders with the object of screening the Colonial Office, they pressed for a day to be set apart for the discussion of the report. A day was given when, in ordinary circumstances, the debate would have been opened by one of the Opposition leaders. But the situation was a peculiar one. The two foremost men

on the front Opposition bench, Sir William Harcourt and Sir Henry Campbell-Bannerman, had signed the report of the committee exonerating the Colonial Office; how then could either of them move the House to censure it? The task of doing so was assumed by Mr. Philip Stanhope,[1] who certainly made a good point against the committee in their neglect to report to the House Mr. Hawkesley's refusal to produce copies of certain telegrams called for by the committee. Stanhope moved, *inter alia*, that Hawkesley should be summoned to the bar of the House; but the raid was already ancient history; more than two years had passed since it took place; members were weary of the subject, having had their attention fully occupied for many weeks with the festivities in celebration of the Queen's Diamond Jubilee, and only 77 went into Stanhope's lobby against 304 in the other.

Reconquest of the Soudan, 1895–99.

During the ten years that followed the "too late" expedition to Khartum and the abandonment of the Soudan, the financial, material and social condition of Egypt had been steadily improving under Sir Evelyn Baring's wise and firm administration. The progress made far exceeded his own most sanguine estimate,[2] and the Egyptian army had already proved the state of efficiency to which British officers had brought it, by the successful relief of Suakin in 1888, the rout of the Wad-el-Nejumi's army of 11,000 at Toski in 1889,[3] both expeditions being under Sir Francis Grenfell,[4] and the defeat of Osman Digna by a force under Colonel Holled Smith in 1891, whereby Tokar and the surrounding district were cleared of Dervishes and the eastern Soudan thereby made secure. The Mahdi had died in 1885, but his place and mission had been assumed by the Khalifa Abdullah-el-Taashi, who was encountered and defeated at Ginnis in 1885 by Sir Frederick Stevenson. The death of the gallant Nejumi at Toski and the rout of his forces put an end, for the time at least, to aggressive Mahdism; but no man could say when fresh trouble might break out from the Soudan. It was neither creditable to

[1] Fourth son of the 5th Earl Stanhope; created Lord Weardale in 1906.
[2] Lord Cromer's *Modern Egypt*, ii. 77.
[3] It was Nejumi who destroyed Hicks Pasha's army in 1883.
[4] Created Lord Grenfell in 1902.

British administration in Egypt nor in accord with the legitimate aspirations of the Egyptians that the lost provinces should be permanently abandoned to anarchy and slave-hunting. In 1895, the Egyptian treasury being once more solvent, and the Egyptian army thoroughly efficient, the question of reconquering Khartum and the Soudan came to the front, and in March 1896 was brought to a decision by the total defeat of the Italian army under Baratieri by King Menelek's Abyssinians. In response to an urgent request by the Italian Government that a diversion in their interest should be undertaken by Great Britain, Lord Salisbury, who hitherto had discouraged any aggressive movement of Egyptian troops, suddenly, on 12th March, directed that Dongola should be reoccupied. Being aware of the flourishing condition of Egyptian finance, and that there was a large accumulation of surplus revenue in the treasury, he took for granted that the expenses of the expedition should be borne by the Egyptian Government, forgetting that the accumulated surplus could not be touched without consent of the Commissioners of the Debt. By a majority of four to two, the Commissioners agreed to an application for £E.500,000; but the French and Russian Commissioners having appealed against this decision to the higher courts, and the decision of the majority having been there reversed, the advance had to be refunded, and was ultimately (6th December) paid out of the British treasury.

A British battalion was sent to Wadi Halfa, and 2500 Indian troops were brought in to protect Suakin; otherwise the expedition was committed entirely to the Egyptian army and placed in command of the Sirdar, Sir Herbert Kitchener. There was some shaking of hoary heads in the Service clubs over the appointment of so young a general.[1] Kitchener was five and forty (only a year younger than Wellington and Napoleon were when their fighting careers were brought to a close at Waterloo). The result proved conclusively how little need there was for increment of years to ripen the talents which Kitchener brought to an enterprise wherein the mere handling of troops in action was a subordinate consideration

Occupation of Dongola, 23rd Sept. 1896.

[1] Created Viscount Kitchener of Khartum in 1902.

to the supreme necessity of organising effective transport and supplies, without wheeled vehicles, through a barren country. This involved the construction of a railway from Sarras, the most southerly Nile outpost of the Egyptian Government, to Kerma, a few miles short of Dongola. As usual, the British public took all these details for granted, and eagerly awaited some dashing feat of arms that should avenge the fate of Hicks Pasha and Gordon. But Kitchener could not afford to risk anything. To give the Egyptians confidence in themselves and their officers he must avoid giving the enemy the slightest advantage of numbers or position. The railway was begun on 20th March; on 6th June the Sirdar determined to attack about 3500 Dervishes at Firket, about sixteen miles distant. Dividing his force of 10,000 men into two columns, early on the morning of the 7th he surrounded, surprised, and completely routed the enemy, with a loss among his own troops of only 20 killed and 80 wounded. After that followed three months of desperately hard work on the railway, and the loss of between 300 and 400 men through cholera. But the fighting was over. So complete had been the Sirdar's preparations that Dongola was occupied on 23rd September, and the campaign was at an end.

But the process of reconquest, once begun, could not be stopped at Dongola. On 15th February 1897 Sir Michael Hicks-Beach told the House of Commons that "Egypt could never be held as permanently secure so long as a hostile power was in occupation of the Nile valley up to Khartum."

On 7th August Abu Hamed was taken by General Hunter; his troops, who behaved splendidly, losing 27 killed and 61 wounded. Towards the end of the year it was clear that the Dervishes were about to assume the offensive once more. Sir Herbert Kitchener telegraphed for more troops—eight British infantry battalions, a regiment of cavalry, and a field battery. In February the Emir Mahmoud, with 12,000 Dervishes, took up a strong and triply entrenched position on the Atbara, the eastern tributary of the Nile. On 20th March Kitchener moved slowly up the river, and carefully

Operations on the Atbara, April 1898.

reconnoitred the enemy's defences. They were so formidable that he exchanged several telegrams with Baring and Grenfell before making up his mind to attack, for it was probable that the enemy could not be dislodged without heavy loss to the assailants. The assault, when it was delivered on the morning of Good Friday, 6th April, was sharp, short and decisive. All was over in less than an hour; Emir Mahmoud was captured; 2000 of his Dervishes died in their entrenchments; the British brigade lost in killed and wounded 4 officers and 104 men; the Egyptian troops lost 5 British and 16 Egyptian officers and 422 men.

The main Mahdist army was now concentrated at Omdurman, and the summer heat was approaching. A second British brigade was sent up the Nile in July, and all was made ready for the crowning object of the campaign—the recapture of Khartum. Early in August Kitchener warned Baring, who was in England, that if he wished to be in Cairo when Khartum would be taken, he should not delay his return beyond 1st September. If the Sirdar had been writing history instead of making it, he could scarcely have fixed the date with more perfect accuracy. At the end of August he lay with some 22,000 men about 40 miles south of Khartum. On 2nd September he was in presence of 40,000 or 50,000 Dervishes under the walls of Omdurman, and received their attack. Eye-witnesses have spoken and written almost regretfully of the magnificent courage shown by the tribesmen. Their one notion of tactics was to find the shortest way to their enemy, "emptying their poor, rotten, home-made cartridges dauntlessly. Their spearmen charged death at every minute hopelessly. . . . A dusky line got up and stormed forward: it bent, broke up, fell apart and disappeared. Before the smoke had cleared another line was bending and storming forward in the same track."[1] It was horrible: but it had to be done. The Maxims and machine guns mowed the gallant fellows down in thousands; one cannot but speculate what might have been the result had they been armed and officered like the Egyptian regiments. The only circumstance that reconciles

Battle of Omdurman, 2nd Sept. 1898.

[1] Steevens's *With Kitchener to Khartum*, p. 282.

one to the contemplation of such terrible punishment upon men who knew not fear, is that by a single hour of slaughter the Soudanese were delivered from prolonged misery and a great province was brought under the beneficent rule of the Egyptian Government. Each successive victory over the Mahdists was hailed as deliverance by the wretched natives, and there was ample evidence of their past sufferings in the number of men, miserably mutilated, who had incurred punishment from the Dervishes.

It is estimated that the Khalifa's loss at Omdurman amounted to 11,000 killed and 16,000 wounded, out of his total force of 40,000 or 50,000. The British lost in killed and wounded 9 officers and 122 men; the Egyptian regiments lost 5 British and 9 Egyptian officers, together with 241 men killed and wounded. Probably in no modern battle has the discrepancy in casualties been so great as between victors and vanquished.

On 4th September the British and Egyptian flags were hoisted on the ruined palace of Khartum, and Gordon was avenged. The Khalifa escaped to the wilds of Kordofan, where he kept a considerable force round his flag; until on 24th November 1899 Sir Reginald Wingate, Kitchener's successor as Sirdar, attacked his camp. The Khalifa and several of his emirs having been killed in action, their followers laid down their arms.

There was little or no opportunity in the Nile campaign of 1896–98 for the exercise of great schemes of strategy or tactical dexterity. Against such an enemy as the Dervishes the invading force had usually to act on the defensive, relying on the superiority of their armament to repel repeated furious onslaughts. There were times when Kitchener, had he been dealing with a commander whose art of war comprised anything more scientific than frontal attack, must have proceeded with far more caution than he found it necessary to observe. For instance, there were several months between the occupation of Abu Hamed and the final advance on Khartum when his army depended for its supplies wholly on the desert railway. Had there been with the Khalifa any trained soldier of experience, an

attempt would assuredly have been made to cut the Anglo-Egyptian communications with Wadi Halfa,[1] which attempt, if successful (and no adequate precautions were taken against it), must have gravely endangered the very existence of the column. But Sir Herbert Kitchener knew with whom he had to deal, and felt, no doubt, that he could take risks which would have been impossible in the presence of a European enemy. The general British public, concentrating their attention upon the actual encounters and the final triumph at Khartum, are too apt to overlook or underrate the real difficulties of the expedition, in overcoming which Kitchener proved himself a military administrator of the first rank. Not the least notable feature of his generalship was its singular economy. He received every man and gun that he asked for; his troops were well fed from first to last, yet the total expenditure of the operations from 1896 to the end of 1898 was only £E.2,354,000, *including* £E.1,200,000 spent on railways and £E.155,000 on gunboats, leaving £E.996,000 for the expenses of the field force itself.[2] Sir Herbert Kitchener's countrymen pronounced his work to have been right well done; the Queen bestowed upon him a peerage, and Parliament awarded him a vote of thanks and a grant of £30,000.

While an English general was thus engaged in recovering for Egypt the territory conquered sixty years before by Muhammad Ali and abandoned to anarchy in 1885, an English firm of contractors were carrying out, at their own risk, an immense engineering work which had been the dream of the Egyptian Government for many years. The climate of Egypt and Nubia being rainless, agriculture in the valley of the Nile depends wholly upon the fertilising inundation caused annually by the flood water brought down from the Abyssinian highlands by the Atbara or Black Nile, which enters the main river about 1500 miles above the Delta. It sometimes happens that the flooding of the Atbara is stinted, which causes a season of "low Nile," with serious loss to

The Assouan dam, 10th Dec. 1902.

[1] Lord Cromer's *Modern Egypt*, ii. 94, note.

[2] Ibid., ii. 105, 106. Of the total expenditure about £E.800,000 was borne by the British treasury, the rest by the Egyptian Government.

cultivators owing to failure of irrigation and the fertilising mud brought in by the Atbara in normal seasons. But even in "low Nile" years plenty of water used to run to waste which, it was plain, might be turned to account by damming the great river at Assouan, near the first cataract, about 600 miles above Cairo. The colossal engineering work involved could not be carried out, even with cheap Egyptian labour, unless at very heavy cost. Lord Cromer, after taking advice from Sir William Garstin, Inspector-General of Irrigation, and Sir Benjamin Baker, who had been joint-engineer of the Forth Bridge, was ready to sanction the undertaking, but failed to obtain the consent of the French Commissioner to the necessary outlay, estimated at about five millions sterling, and the project must have been abandoned, for the time at least, but for the heroism of the member for Paddington.

Aye, heroism; for warfare has no monopoly of the qualities that go to make a hero, a term for which Dr. Johnson gave two meanings in his Dictionary—(1) "a man eminent for bravery; (2) a man of the highest class in any respect." John Aird's action at this time entitles him to be classed as a hero according to either definition. Head of a great contracting firm in Westminster, he offered to build the dam at his own risk, asking for no payment until the work was finished, and then spreading the settlement over thirty years by half-yearly instalments of £78,613, the dam to be completed and in working order by 1903. The French Commissioner could not find it in his heart to refuse this daring offer, and the greatest barrage in the world was opened by H.R.H. the Duke of Connaught on 10th December 1902. It is built of granite, quarried on the spot and set in Portland cement; it is one mile and a quarter long, nearly one hundred feet thick at the base. Its greatest height is 130 feet, and at times it holds back the water at a level of 67 feet above the natural level. The water stored for irrigation is estimated at 444,000,000,000 gallons, weighing 1,000,000,000 tons.[1] If and when the time comes for the British to withdraw from Egypt, they will leave behind them in the Assouan dam a monument of

[1] The storage has been considerably increased since 1902.

their administration not unworthy to bear comparison with the most enduring works of the Pharaohs.[1]

The 20th June 1897 was the sixtieth anniversary of Queen Victoria's accession, and in every part of the Empire her subjects celebrated the Diamond Jubilee with a fervour that owed much of its intensity to the personal character of the Sovereign.[2] Not one in fifty thousand of those subjects had ever set eyes upon the Queen Empress; not one in five hundred thousand had exchanged a word with her; it was but a small minority even of the leisured and expensively educated class whose knowledge of history enabled them to compare the Victorian court with the courts that preceded it, or to realise the degree in which her Majesty had raised the tone of society and restored the honour of the Crown in the judgment of the people. But the lustre of her reign, the unexampled material welfare of the inhabitants of her spacious dominions were patent to all, and the name of Victoria commanded a wider and more spontaneous homage than ever was yielded to a Semiramis or a Cæsar. The Diamond Jubilee, 1897.

To celebrate the occasion Queen Victoria's own metropolis transformed its sombre thoroughfares and murky squares into one vast labyrinth of fluttering colour by day and many-hued lights by night. The humblest abode displayed its bit of bunting; and the competitive efforts of the Office of Works, the City Corporation,[3] the County Council and other public bodies, and the great west-end shops and clubs, gave carpenters and upholsterers, florists and pyrotechnists, "the time of their lives." London loves a festival of this kind; but to get enjoyment out of it Londoners, and the vast inrush of country people, colonials and foreigners, who flocked in from all quarters to do honour to the Queen, had to rely on the British climate. For a week or ten days before the 22nd the weather was wet and gusty; on the morning of Jubilee Day the sky was overcast and lowering: was the tradition of "Queen's weather" going to break down? Nay, it was to receive signal confir-

[1] On the very day when these lines were written (7th January 1910) the newspapers announced the death of Sir John Aird.

[2] The actual celebration took place on 22nd June; in 1887 it was held on the 21st.

[3] The Corporation voted £25,000 to the decoration fund.

mation. If the organisers of the procession which the Queen was to lead to St. Paul's Cathedral had obtained control of the sun, they could not have regulated its radiance to better effect. Exactly as the first gun of the royal salute was fired in Hyde Park at 11.15, to announce that her Majesty was leaving Buckingham Palace, the sun broke out in midsummer splendour, rolling away the prevailing haze, and the rest of the day's proceedings were completed under a blue sky.

Mr. Chamberlain, the Colonial Secretary, took full advantage of the occasion to bring the colonial possessions of the Sovereign into prominence. The Premiers of all the self-governing colonies (without exception, if I mistake not) were present; and Field-Marshal Lord Roberts was given command of a contingent composed of detachments of Indian and Colonial troops. Perhaps this feature in the procession attracted more attentive admiration than any other, except the Queen herself—Canadian Hussars and Dragoons, South Australian and New South Wales Lancers, Victorian and Queensland Mounted Rifles, New Zealand Cavalry, Natal Carabineers, Cape Mounted Rifles; besides detachments from the Crown colonies, Mounted Rifles from Trinidad, sable Haussas in their picturesque Zouave dress, white-capped Hong Kong police, Zaptiehs from Cyprus, Malays and Dyaks, and the splendid soldiery of our Indian Empire. The number and variety of nationalities owning allegiance to the Crown of Britain could hardly have been presented in more graphic epitome.

"Scarlet and gold, azure and gold, purple and gold, emerald and gold, white and gold—always a changing tumult of colours . . . and always blinding gold. . . . And there was a little, quiet, flushed old lady; all in black, a silver streak under the black bonnet, a simple white sunshade, sitting quite still, with the corners of her mouth drawn tight, as if she were trying not to cry. . . . So very quiet, so very grave, so very punctual, so unmistakably and every inch a lady and a Queen. Almost pathetic, if you will, that small black figure in the middle of these shining cavaliers, this great army, this roaring multitude; but also very glorious. When the other kings of the world drive abroad, the escort rides close in at the wheels of the carriage: the Queen drove through her people quite plain and open, with just one soldier at the kerbstone between her and them."[1]

[1] G. W. Steevens in the *Daily Mail.*

In the intervals of high festival, Mr. Chamberlain presided over the second Colonial Conference, at which many and various projects were discussed for drawing closer the ties uniting the different communities within the Empire, and for ensuring their permanence, so far as human foresight might avail. The proposal so often mooted of providing the principal self-governing colonies with direct representation in the Imperial Parliament, was considered; but the more closely it was examined, the less effective appeared a system under which, while the labours of an overladen legislature would be increased, the colonial members must be in a minority, numerically insignificant, upon any question whereon they differed with the government of the day. The advantage, however, of conferences between the leading statesmen of the mother country and the colonies was beyond question, and it was definitely settled that these should be held in the future at regular intervals.

The second Colonial Conference, 1897.

It was natural that the Diamond Jubilee should prove an occasion for retrospect and stock-taking. It was at once a milestone and a time-table, turning the thoughts of many to the changes wrought during the reign in the physical and intellectual environment of the people and the progress accomplished in almost every sphere of human activity. An attempt having been made in these pages to record in due sequence the principal events of the nineteenth century, it may be thought that any general survey should be reserved until its course has been traced to a close. But that close was reached in the clash of arms, when the whole faculties of the nation were absorbed in a great war. The lull of the Jubilee seems to give a more fitting opportunity than will occur again for touching lightly a few points in the development of modern England.

In no respect has the progress of science more powerfully affected the habits of every class of the people than by providing new and rapid means of locomotion and communication. Sir Walter Scott, in one of the opening chapters of the *Heart of Midlothian* (published in 1818), referred to what seemed to him the wonderful acceleration and increased facilities

Modern locomotion.

for travel, and in a daring flight of imagination observed: "Perhaps the echoes of Ben Nevis may soon be awakened by the bugle, not of a warlike chieftain, but of the guard of a mail-coach." The standard of speed at that time, and for many years later, was the pace of a horse (we still rate engines at so many horse-power). The Holyhead mail left London at 8 P.M., and took twenty-seven hours to reach Shrewsbury, a journey of 162 miles. Twenty years later, the well-known sporting writer "Nimrod"[1] expressed amazement at the acceleration of coach-travel. "Even at the present wonder-working period, few greater improvements have been made in any of the useful arts than in those applied to the system of travelling by land. . . . The Edinburgh mail runs the distance, 400 miles, in a little over forty hours, and we may set our watches by it at any point of the journey" [the Flying Scotsman from King's Cross now accomplishes it in eight hours]. . . . The Devonport mail does her work in first-rate style, 227 miles in twenty-two hours" [the Great Western Railway is timed to do it in 5 hours 42 minutes].

The nineteenth century was well on its way before anything approaching such speed and regularity could be attained by the fastest coaches. What rendered them possible was the invention of John Loudon M'Adam, owner of the small estate of Sauchrie in Ayrshire.[2] Displeased with the loose construction, the rough and dangerous surface of the roads throughout the United Kingdom, and the costliness of keeping them in anything like repair, he began a series of experiments at his own expense, and came to the conclusion that the right material for road-making was hard stone broken into small cubes of uniform size. Having been appointed surveyor-general of the Bristol roads in 1815, M'Adam was able to put his theory into practice, and the result was so excellent

John Loudon M'Adam, 1756–1836.

[1] C. J. Apperley in *The Chase, the Road, the Turf*, 1835.

[2] M'Adam was descended from a member of the proscribed MacGregors—"the clan that is nameless by day." It is said that when his forefather, in compliance with the statute that prohibited the ancient patronymic, adopted that of M'Adam, he remarked—"They canna surely object to me calling myself a son of Adam!"

that a committee of the House of Commons was appointed to inquire into the merits of the new system. The report of the committee being entirely favourable to its adoption M'Adam was appointed general surveyor of roads in 1827, receiving a grant of £10,000 to indemnify him for his outlay in experiments, but declining the honour of knighthood which was offered him.

The transition from road traffic to railways was not accomplished without bitter and influential opposition. That entertaining gossip, Thomas Creevey, was a member of the Parliamentary Committee which had to deal with the bill of the Liverpool and Manchester Railway Company in 1825. Writing on 16th March he thus expresses his feelings about the project:—

The railway movement, 1830–1900.

"Sefton and I have come to the conclusion that our Ferguson[1] is *insane*. He quite foamed at the mouth with rage in our railway committee in support of this infernal nuisance—the loco-motive Monster, carrying *eighty tons* of goods, and navigated by a tail of smoke and sulphur, coming thro' every man's grounds between Manchester and Liverpool. He was supported by Scotchmen only, except a son of Sir Robert Peel's,[2] and against every landed gentleman of the county. . . .

"16*th March*. . . . I get daily more interested in this railway —on its own grounds, to begin with, and the infernal, impudent, lying jobbing by its promoters. . . .

"1*st June*. . . . Well—this devil of a railway is strangled at last. . . . To-day we had a clear majority in the committee in our favour, and the promoters of the bill withdrew it, and took their leave of us."[3]

Howbeit the bill got through the committee in the following session, and in 1829 Creevey was treated to a trial trip over the new railway.

"I had the satisfaction—for I can't call it *pleasure*—of taking a trip of five miles in it, which we did in just a quarter of an hour, that is, 20 miles an hour. . . . But observe, during these five miles the machine was occasionally made to put itself out or *go it*, and then we went at the rate of 23 miles an hour. . . . But the quickest motion is to me *frightful*: it is really flying, and

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[1] Major-General R. C. Ferguson, M.P.
[2] The allusion is to the future Prime Minister.
[3] *The Creevey Papers*, vol. ii. pp. 87, 88.

it is impossible to divest yourself of the notion of instant death to all upon the least accident happening. It gave me a headache, which has not left me yet. Sefton is convinced that some damnable thing will come of it. . . . I am quite satisfied with my *first* achievement being my *last*."[1]

Sixteen years later, in 1845, there were 2441 miles laid with rails in the United Kingdom, the total capital of the railway companies being £88,481,376.

In the last year of the century the mileage open for traffic was 21,855, the total capital invested, £1,176,001,890, and the number of passengers booked (season-ticket holders excluded), 1,142,276,686, or about twenty-eight times the total population of the realm. The number of railway servants employed in the United Kingdom in that year was 440,347.

One of the first effects of the extension of railways was to cause the highways of the country, which M'Adam had brought to an unprecedented state of efficiency, to fall greatly into disuse, but we have lived to see them more densely thronged than ever. Since the middle of the eighteenth century repeated attempts had been made to apply mechanical propulsion to vehicles running on ordinary roads. After the peace in 1815, the velocipede was introduced into England from France; but it was little more than a clumsy toy—a couple of wooden wheels, one behind the other, united by a bar with a seat for the rider, who had to propel himself by pushing the ground with his feet. Velocipedes soon went out of vogue, and it was not until the early "seventies" that two Frenchmen, MM. Michaux and Magee, turned out bicycles made of iron and steel, and propelled through a crank action by the rider's feet. The front wheel was the driver, measuring 55 to 60 inches in diameter. Bicycling and bicycle-racing soon became a favourite pastime with young people, although even the application of solid rubber tyres did so little to relieve the jolting upon ordinary roads that these machines became familiarly known as "boneshakers." It was the invention of pneumatic tyres and a

Bicycling, 1870–1900.

[1] *The Creevey Papers*, vol. ii. p. 204.

modification of the original design into the "safety bicycle" that brought this mode of locomotion into universal favour. About the middle of the eighties the world of fashion might be seen in Battersea Park, and other resorts more or less secluded—rushing and lurching, gliding and staggering —on its new toy. Immense capital was invested in the manufacture of bicycles; competition brought down prices to within compass of slender purses; and then it became manifest that what had been designed as a plaything for wealthy folk was to prove an inestimable boon to hard-working clerks, artisans and labourers of all sorts. The scene in Richmond Park on any fine summer evening —scores, hundreds, of young men and women enjoying themselves innocently and healthfully in that delectable pleasaunce, resting under the trees or exploring the most secluded glades—causes one to speculate what kind of recreation they could have found before this easy means of escape from the crowded city was provided for them.

The streets of the city now present such a spectacle of swift locomotion by day and night as might cause one to forget how very recent and sudden has been the development of motor traffic. It was only in 1896 that the law was altered which restricted the speed of mechanically-driven carriages on streets and public roads to a maximum of four miles an hour, and then only when preceded by a man on foot carrying a red flag. The application of electricity and of the internal-combustion engine to carriage traffic had made considerable advance on the Continent before the more conservative British authorities would consent to the regulations being relaxed. This was done by the Act of 1896, which fixed twelve miles an hour, shortly afterwards increased to twenty, as the maximum speed; which reform was celebrated on 14th November by a parade of horseless carriages and an excursion to Brighton. It cannot be said that the spectacle, which was marred by execrable weather, conveyed to the public any serious apprehension of the impending revolution in road traffic, which has since come to pass in such a degree as to

Motor traffic, 1896–1900.

make the supply of army remounts a question of urgent anxiety to the War Office.[1]

The subject of terrestrial locomotion cannot be dismissed without alluding to a scheme for its extension which, let us hope, has perished beyond chance of revival. Sir Edward Watkin, chairman of the South-Eastern Railway, repeatedly brought before the Parliament of 1880–85 his favourite project of a tunnel under the Straits of Dover to the French coast, to enable trains to be run without interruption between Great Britain and the Continent. He was able to satisfy everybody as to its feasibility, for a thick stratum of grey chalk of uniform consistency extends under the sea from shore to shore. Indeed, Sir Edward did not wait for parliamentary sanction to begin the tunnel; he drove it for several hundred yards under the Straits without meeting any engineering difficulty. There was no little risk that the House of Commons would allow the bill to pass, for people seemed strangely blind to the strategic advantage of our insular position. It was not until the Unionists were in office for the second time that, acting on the advice of the military authorities, the Government laid a final prohibition on any further progress with the works.[2]

The Channel Tunnel scheme, 1882–87.

Steam power has effected a transformation in the appearance and powers of our shipping not less sweeping than that wrought upon land traffic. First applied to the propulsion of vessels in 1802, its use steadily advanced until in 1835 the first steamship left Falmouth with mails for Egypt and India

Steam navigation, 1802–1900.

[1] In 1909 there were 15,906 vehicles licensed to ply for hire in London.

	Horse Power.	Mechanical Power.
Hackney cabs	6,562	3,956
Omnibuses	1,771	1,180
Tram-cars	239	2,198
	8,572	7,334

Since then the increase of motor cabs has been so rapid as to ensure the total extinction before long of the hansom cab, which Disraeli called "the gondola of London."

[2] One of the minor objections to the scheme consists in the difference of gauge between English and French railways. Bulk would still have had to be broken between the two countries unless one had adapted its rails to the vehicles of the other.

but it was not until 1838 that the first vessel propelled entirely by steam crossed the Atlantic.

Greatly as the design and appearance of the mercantile marine has been altered to meet the requirement of speed, still more complete has been the metamorphosis in the construction of war-ships, for in these the introduction of steam power has been followed by the provision of strength to keep abreast of the ever-increasing power of rifled ordnance. At first it was considered enough to bring "the wooden walls of Old England" up to date by fitting engines into vessels of the old type; but, apart from the inadequacy of merely auxiliary steam power for rapid movement, a single shot in the engine-room might hopelessly cripple a wooden line-of-battle ship. Strange to say it was the French Admiralty which set England the example of increasing the defensive qualities of ships of war. In 1859 four iron-plated ships were being built in French dockyards; the British Admiralty did not decide on building the *Warrior*, our first ironclad, till the following winter. In 1861 there were still sixty-seven wooden ships being built or being converted from sailing to steam-vessels for the Royal Navy. But the long and costly contest between armour-plating and guns had now begun; year by year the armour had to be rolled thicker and thicker to meet the increasing weight and velocity of projectiles; until, by the reduction of masts and spars to the bare necessities of signalling, the submergence of the hull to reduce vulnerable surface, the increase of engine space and the reduction of the armament from numerous broadside guns to a few pieces of immense power, modern battle-ships have lost all semblance to the stately seventy-fours with their towering canvas, and have acquired the appearance of mobile fortresses. Yard-arm to yard-arm was the aim of Nelson and his captains; the range of modern naval guns is measured by miles; and unimaginable by the victors of Trafalgar are the submarine vessels designed to strike beneath the waves.

The revolution in warfare, commerce and social intercourse brought about by electric telegraphy has been noticed above,[1] but even that has been outdone by subsequent

[1] See vol. ii. p. 339.

modes of utilising the electric current; for, just as speech is swifter than writing, so the telephone has gone far to annul space as a bar to conversation. It was thought marvellous when, in 1852, a cable was successfully laid under the Channel making it easy to communicate by a code of signals between London and Paris; but now statesmen, commercial men and philosophers in the two cities may discuss affairs confidentially by word of mouth—nay, Pyramus in Paris may listen with rapture to the very accents of Thisbe lingering in London.

Graham Bell invents the telephone, 1876.

One of the most remarkable modifications of the telephone is the American Edison's phonograph, known also in one of its modified forms as the gramophone, in which sounds are printed on a receiver of tinfoil by a needle responding to the vibrations of an elastic membrane. To reproduce the sounds it is only necessary to set the needle at the beginning of the record; the receiver is then made to rotate, when the original vibrations are communicated to the membrane, causing it to repeat the sounds. Music and speech are thus stored up for repetition at will, and children to the third and fourth generation will be able to say with literal truth of a forefather—"He being dead still speaketh."

Edison's phonograph.

The century was not to close before electrical science should score yet another triumph. Guglielmo Marconi, son of an Italian father by an Irish mother, devoted himself so ardently to electrical engineering as to discover the means of conveying messages without the intervention of wires or cables. He was only six-and-twenty when, after preliminary tests of his system at Penarth in England and Spezzia in Italy, he established wireless communication between England and France. His system has now been adopted in the Royal Navy and by all the principal shipping companies, British and foreign; sea-going ships carry apparatus enabling them to send and receive "Marconigrams" over a distance of a thousand miles; and messages can be transmitted between Cape Breton in Canada and England, and between Cape Cod in the United States and England.

Wireless telegraphy established, 1899.

Many of the older houses in Bloomsbury, Marylebone, and Mayfair retain in the ironwork at their front doors the conical holders where links used to be fixed to light ladies to and from their coaches or sedan chairs. These remind one forcibly of the great change wrought in the aspect of our streets at night by the application of coal-gas as an illuminant. The invention rightly belongs to the nineteenth century, for although the centenary of gas-lighting was celebrated in 1892, it ought to have been deferred for ten years. It is true that the inventor, Robert Murdock,[1] succeeded after a long series of experiments in lighting his own dining-table at Redruth with coal-gas in 1792, but its first practical use was in 1803, when the factory of his employers, Boulton and Watt, at Soho was fitted with an apparatus. Soon after that the new invention was exploited by several companies (the Gas-Light and Coke Company received parliamentary powers in 1809), and the use of gas became general.[2] Since then illuminating gas has been extracted from several other sources, but the whole system of illumination by combustion was threatened in the last quarter of the century by the discovery of the incandescent and arc processes of electricity. The invention of an illuminant which neither pollutes nor exhausts the air breathed by human beings, which is easily managed and throws off no smoke and very little heat, was one of the benefits of applied science most characteristic of the age. Gas, however, is far from being superseded as yet, competition with electricity having stimulated the ingenuity of inventors to devise improved methods of combustion, so that modern gas-lights are almost as far superior to the flaring burners of the middle of the century as these were better than the candles, oil lamps and links of the Georgian era.

Modern illuminants, 1803–1900.

Although the action of light upon nitrate and chloride of silver had been the subject of observation and experiment

[1] Being a Scotsman, his right name was Murdoch, but when he left his native Ayrshire to enter employment with the famous firm of Boulton and Watt in Soho, he changed the spelling in conformity with the pronunciation of his English fellow-workmen.

[2] Albeit the present writer recollects in 1874 being charged half-a-guinea a day for wax candles in Fenton's Hotel, St. James's Street (now disappeared).

by the Swedish chemist Scheele and others from the middle of the eighteenth century, the origin of photography must be traced to a paper contributed to the Journal of the Royal Institution in 1802, by Thomas Wedgwood,[1] with notes by Sir Humphry Davy. Wedgwood died in 1805, before he had discovered any means of fixing the images he obtained upon sensitised surfaces. That was reserved for an officer in the French army, Nicéphore de Niepce, who studied *actinescence* from 1814 till 1827, when he took Louis Daguerre as collaborator who, continuing experiments after Niepce's death in 1833, succeeded in producing the light-pictures known as daguerreotypes. Next, the Englishman Fox Talbot took up the running, patenting in 1841 his calotype process, obtained by applying iodide of silver to paper. All these processes involved prolonged exposure, and could be carried out only by experts; but the discovery, first of collodion as a vehicle in 1850, and then of the dry plate process, so greatly simplified operations as to bring photography well within the compass of amateurs, and immeasurably increased its value to scientific research. The exposure of thirty minutes required to produce a daguerreotype has been reduced to fractions of a second by the use of gelatine emulsion, and has rendered possible the marvellous display of the kinematograph, wherein by a rapid succession of instantaneous exposures a series of impressions is obtained, so closely consecutive that, when the images are cast upon a screen in equally rapid succession, figures of men, animals, waves, &c., may be seen in natural movement.

Photography, 1802–1900.

As to the effect of photography upon painting and other forms of graphic art, opinion is not unanimous. It has facilitated the cheap reproduction of acknowledged masterpieces, at some risk of stereotyping conventional composition; on the other hand it has tended to establish a more exacting standard of fidelity to nature. While it has encouraged some painters to aim at intense realism, it has driven others to the reactionary style termed "impressionist." Judging roughly from the vast number of pictures painted and exhibited each year, and the immense

[1] Son of Josiah Wedgwood, the famous potter.

prices paid for the works of favourite masters, both living and dead, it does not seem that, great as must be the aggregate expenditure on photographs, the market for good painting has been appreciably affected.[1]

One branch of graphic art certainly has suffered by the rivalry of sun-pictures, namely, the various kinds of engraving. Wood-engraving has not only been scotched, but killed; and, although the illustration of books was never so profuse as it is now, the average quality has been sadly impaired. Excellent results are obtained in the best methods of photo-lithography and photogravure, especially where, as in scientific works, absolute accuracy in details is required; but the extent to which cheap "process" plates have supplanted engraving on steel, copper, and wood is deplorable from an artistic point of view.[2]

In reckoning the advance made in the various arts and sciences during the century, it would be insincere to omit reference to the paralysis which has overtaken architecture. At no period of the world's history have architects been more ingenious, daring, and learned, or builders more skilful than they are at the present day, but they have lost the creative faculty and exercise only the adaptive. Perhaps it may be urged that architecture in Western Europe ceased to be a living art at the advent of the renaissance; nevertheless, despite the fervour with which the pseudo-classic style was adopted in the sixteenth century, it was three hundred years before public buildings and private houses in this country became divested of those features whereby their date could be determined with approximate accuracy. The brothers Adam (ot whom the leading genius, Robert, died in 1792) were perhaps the last British architects to leave an unmistakable distinctive impress upon their work. Is it

Architecture in the nineteenth century.

[1] A single illustration of the rise in the market, if not the intrinsic, value of paintings may be permitted. George Romney received 126 guineas for painting a full-length portrait of Mrs. Lee Acton. In 1901 a London dealer told me that he had offered the owner 18,000 guineas for this picture.

[2] The extraordinary combination of vigour and delicacy whereof it was possible to render such an intractable material as box-wood the medium may be realised by studying such a woodcut as that of the young curlew in Yarrell's *British Birds* (3rd edition, 1856), vol. ii. p. 615.

now one's purpose to build a cathedral, a public institution, a country house, a riverside villa—let him provide the money and he shall have one as soundly built, as richly decorated, as perfect in all its parts as human craft could ever have produced in the past. But he must make up his own mind about the style—Greek, Palladian, Norman, Early English, Perpendicular, Tudor, Jacobean, Georgian—and then trust his architect to execute a masterpiece in any one of them. If the choice is left to the architect there is no saying whether he will produce an edifice in the fashion approved by Pericles or Francois I^er^, Queen Anne or the Abencerrages. Cities grow apace, never was expenditure so lavish in construction and ornament, never were buildings more soundly, conveniently and tastefully designed and executed; but British architecture is dead, or dormant.

Literature.

As was inevitable, the rise of a generation under universal compulsory education has greatly stimulated the demand for literature of certain sorts, nor have publishers and the press generally been behindhand with a corresponding supply. The establishment of free public libraries in many parts of the country has brought good literature within the reach of thousands who could never have attained it otherwise. Some sinister conclusions have been drawn from the fact that, as shown by the returns of these libraries, the demand for works of fiction enormously exceeds that for all other branches of literature put together; but those who frequent public libraries most are hard-working folk who turn to books more readily for recreation than for instruction. It is well therefore that, on the whole, English and American fiction is wholesome in tone. There have been notable exceptions, but they are few in number. The law will not allow a writer to be gross in expression; if he would be immoral, it must be in language so veiled as to be unintelligible to innocent minds. The restraint observed by English novelists in directions where continental writers claim a looser rein has sometimes been traced to an origin in the austerity of the Victorian court in contrast with the lax morality of its predecessors; but that is not the case. The romances of Walter Scott, Jane Austen and Maria Edgeworth were composed in the

licentious atmosphere of the Regency, and the vast popularity they commanded marked a considerable change in the public taste since the days of Smollett, Fielding and even Richardson.

To attempt the most cursory survey of the literature of the century in a work of the dimensions of the present is manifestly out of the question; but it is impossible to omit some notice, however brief, of the development of journalism. Newspapers, as we know them, are the joint result of the removal of the paper tax in 1861, the spread of electric telegraphy, and the improvement in printing machinery. The advance has been even more remarkable in the provincial journals than in those published in the metropolis, seeing that the disparity in quality between them was so great one hundred years ago. At present there is an equal display of enterprise and excellence in each. Modern journalism.

British journalism differs in several of its conditions from that of most European countries. In the first place, it is absolutely free—there is nothing of the nature of censorship; and in those rare instances of interference by the State during the last fifty years, as have occasionally happened in Ireland, the offence has not been political, but such incitement to criminal acts as would be punishable in any individual citizen. Another point of difference is that the British Government has no official or semi-official organ in the daily press. One finds it sometimes extremely difficult to convince foreigners of this, or to make them believe that, when it is necessary for the Government or for a Department of State to communicate an official announcement, it is made through a press agency, thence finding its way into journals of all shades of politics. Lastly, British journals usually maintain impersonality. It is true that critical reviews have been more frequently signed of late than used to be the fashion; but leading articles in journals of good standing are invariably anonymous, whereas in France attention is drawn to them in proportion to the repute of the writer over whose name they appear. Of the enormous daily output of the newspaper press in London alone, some idea may be had

from the statistics of a single distributing firm,[1] which on the morning of Valentine's Day 1893—the day after Gladstone introduced his second Home Rule Bill—despatched 374,218 newspapers, weighing more than 44 tons.

But the daily press, though the most important, is by no means the only huge branch of journalism. Every industry, every religious sect, every shade of opinion, every form of amusement, each has its special and peculiar organs; and the weight of literature that can be conveyed to the uttermost limits of the Empire at the cost of one halfpenny has no limit, provided it fulfils the definition of a newspaper.

It is a commonplace observation to make that in no similar period of the world's history has natural science advanced so swiftly and so surely as it has in the nineteenth century. Three hundred years ago it was possible for Francis Bacon to survey the entire firmament of human knowledge; but since then every class of research has been divided and subdivided into sections, each of which is the peculiar department of a group of specialists. The knowledge that Bacon was able to compress into *The Advancement of Learning* and the *Novum Organum* has attained such dimensions that the mere summary thereof fills twenty-five volumes in quarto of the *Encyclopædia Britannica*, containing upwards of 20,750 doubled-columned pages, contributed by a staff of 1200 writers.[2]

It may be affirmed with confidence that in no department of applied science has the progress attained brought such immediate benefit to human beings as in that of surgery. The discovery and application of chloroform has been recorded in an earlier chapter;[3] Queen Victoria's Diamond Jubilee was celebrated also as the fiftieth anniversary of the introduction of chloroform into the Edinburgh hospitals. Since that time other and safer anæsthetics have come into use; nor is

Modern surgery.

[1] Messrs. W. H. Smith & Son.

[2] The reference is to the ninth edition, 1875–89. A new edition is in course of publication at the present time (1911).

[3] See vol. ii. p. 180.

their merit as aids to surgery confined to the mere protection of the sufferer from pain; they render it possible to perform operations of such a nature as would be well-nigh impossible on a sentient being.

Although it is the name of a Frenchman, the late M. Pasteur, that is most conspicuously associated with recent progress in pathology, it was Sir Joseph Lister[1] who was led by Pasteur's researches into the processes of fermentation to devise antiseptic surgery. He employed carbolic acid, previously known as little more than a laboratory product, to destroy the micro-organisms that produce ulceration and other trouble in wounds. Carrying his researches still further, he superseded antiseptic treatment by aseptic, whereby, through sterilising every object that could come in contact with a wound, he excluded micro-organisms altogether, and thenceforward such operations were rendered possible as surpassed the most daring dreams of the old school of surgeons. From the work of Pasteur and Lister has arisen the science of bacteriology, which, while it has explained what had been previously obscure in the process of protective inoculation, vaccination, &c., has also opened out incalculable possibilities in the prevention and control of disease.

Before the close of the nineteenth century the people of the United Kingdom had been practically delivered from one of the most terrible scourges that ever afflicted suffering humanity. The loathsome character of small-pox, the rapidity of its contagion, and the permanent disfigurement of most of those who survived its attack, caused it to be more dreaded than any other epidemic. Protective inoculation with virus taken from patients suffering from the milder forms of the disease had long been practised, on the whole, it is said, with fairly satisfactory results; but there never was any security against the disease so imported into the system assuming a virulent form. Towards the close of the eighteenth century Dr. Edward Jenner, a native of Gloucestershire, became convinced of the truth of a belief current in the west of England, that dairymaids who had contracted cow-

Vaccination, 1798–1909.

[1] Created Lord Lister in 1897.

pox from cows never were attacked by small-pox. Accordingly in 1796 he inoculated a boy of eight years old with cow-pox taken from vesicles in the hand of a dairy-maid. This was done on 14th May; on 1st July the boy, having recovered from the cow-pox, was inoculated with virus from a small-pox patient, and *did not take the disease.* Here was the dawn of one of the most beneficent discoveries in the world's history. Jenner went to London and reported his experiment to the Royal College of Surgeons, but failing to find anybody willing to submit to vaccination, he returned home and busied himself by sending supplies of vaccine to various parts of England and foreign countries. By degrees, slow but sure, the value of his invention was verified and acknowledged. In 1802 a parliamentary committee was appointed to inquire into the merits of the system and reported favourably, and Parliament voted a grant of £10,000 to indemnify him for the cost of his experiments.[1] The Jennerian Institution was founded by help of Lord Egremont, to be superseded in 1809 by a state-aided laboratory called the National Vaccine Establishment, and the crusade against small-pox was fairly afoot. Inoculation continued to be practised for several years, but in 1840 it was prohibited by Act of Parliament, and the payment of fees for vaccination was thrown upon the rates. Vaccination was made compulsory by the Act of 1853, and in 1871 the various statutes on the subject were consolidated under a fresh Act. But no law is so beneficent as not to excite opposition, especially if it is compulsory. Mischievous busybodies were not wanting to persuade ignorant parents that vaccination was unhealthy and irreligious; the law was evaded in some places, notably in Leicester, by a considerable number of people, and occasional outbreaks of small-pox have been the result.[2]

[1] Dr. Matthew Baillie, giving evidence before the committee, said:—"If Dr. Jenner had not chosen openly and honourably to explain to the public all he knew upon the subject, he might have acquired a considerable fortune. In my opinion it is the most important discovery ever made in medicine."

[2] There was one in Sheffield in 1887–88. Of 6088 persons attacked, 590 died. Among children under ten years 5 per 1000 of those who had been vaccinated took small-pox, but only ·09 per 1000 died. Of unvaccinated children, 101 per 1000 were attacked and 44 per 1000 died.

So persistent was the agitation against compulsion, and so undesirable was it considered to cause people to pose as martyrs by fining them repeatedly for not complying with the law, that in 1898 Lord Salisbury's government relaxed it so far as to exempt any parent who can satisfy the magistrate that he conscientiously objects to a child being vaccinated, believing it to be prejudicial to health.

CHAPTER XII

The Convention of London—The Bloemfontein Conference—Warlike preparation in the Transvaal—The Boers invade Natal—Action at Glencoe—And at Elandslaagte—Surrender at Nicholson's Nek—Siege of Ladysmith—Faulty strategy of Cronje and Botha—Battle of Belmont—Battle of Magersfontein—Gatacre's reverse at Stormberg—Battle of Colenso.

TWICE since the Revolution has the British Government sued for peace after being worsted in war, and each time the victors were subjects of the British Crown; once when, in 1782, Cornwallis and his whole army surrendered to Washington and Rochambeau at Yorktown, resulting in the Treaty of Paris, 1784, whereby Great Britain acknowledged the independence of her revolted North American colonies; and again on 3rd August 1881, when Great Britain, smarting under the reverse to her arms at Laing's Nek and Majuba, restored by the Treaty of Pretoria independence to the victorious Boers, seeking to save her face by retaining suzerainty over the Transvaal State. It baffled the erudition of constitutional lawyers to define the operative powers of suzerainty, nor were etymologists of any better service, for they could only explain that in its origin "suzerain" was identical in meaning with "sovereign."[1] This only *was* clear—that suzerainty meant a very different kind of authority from sovereignty, and the utmost claimed for it was that it precluded the Boers from making treaties with foreign powers without the consent of the Queen's Government.

Slight and shadowy as this restraint might be upon the Boer Government, it was felt to be inconsistent with Boer aspirations for a Dutch South Africa; wherefore Paul Krüger, having been elected President in 1883, visited

[1] "Sovereign" coming through French from the Low Latin *superanus*—*super* = superior; and "suzerain" being actually a French word from the Low Latin *suseranus*, a derivative of *sursum* = above.

Lord Derby in London with other Boer delegates, and found him so pliant as to consent to whittle down the objectionable conditions a little further. By the Convention of London, signed in 1884, the Transvaal State was accorded the title of the South African Republic, certain boundaries were readjusted, the ambiguous term "suzerain" was struck out, and the nature and extent of British control more precisely defined than it had been in the Convention of Pretoria. It was set forth as reserving the right of veto upon any treaty with a foreign Power other than the Orange Free State, and securing the right of British subjects to live and trade within the Republic, without being more heavily taxed than the citizens of the Republic. Immediately thereafter came the discovery of enormous mineral wealth in the Transvaal, followed by the inrush of British prospectors, the trouble with the Uitlanders and the Jameson raid, already described.[1]

Convention of London, 1884.

With the project of a South African Confederation, favoured though it was by President Brand of the Orange Free State, Krüger would have nothing to do; indeed it was not easy to see how a Republic which the Imperial Government had sanctioned could be incorporated in a federation under the British Flag. Moreover, part of the federation scheme was a customs union and uniform tariff, which by no means squared with Krüger's views upon finance. Determined that the Republic should be mistress, if not, as he desired, of South Africa, at all hazards and in any event of her own destiny, from the peace of 1881 onwards he never relaxed efforts in perfecting the armament and military organisation of the Republic. This policy was extended to the Orange Free State, when, President Brand being dead, the Orange Volksraad in June 1895 passed a resolution in favour of federation with the Transvaal. The Jameson raid gave an instant stimulus to warlike preparation; Pretoria and Johannesburg were fortified, and immense stores of artillery, small arms and ammunition of the most modern types were laid in, and paid for by taxes levied on Uitlanders. In June 1899 it

[1] See p. 261, *supra*.

was estimated by the British Intelligence Department that there were 53,604 men of military age (between 16 and 60) in the two Republics, of whom 40,000 might be reckoned as ready to take the field. No calculation was possible of the number of Cape Dutch and foreigners who might take service with the Boers in the event of war.

At this time the British force in the whole of South Africa consisted of only six battalions and a half of infantry, two regiments of cavalry, four field batteries, one mountain battery, and the Colonial Volunteers.

To enable readers to realise how far Krüger had departed from his undertaking in regard to the Uitlanders in the Transvaal, it may be well to refer to the blue book containing the proceedings of conferences held at Newcastle between the Queen's commissioners and the Boer deputies, preliminary to the Convention of Pretoria in 1881, when independence was restored to the Boer Republic. The first conference was on 10th May 1881.

239. *Sir Hercules Robinson, President of the Conference.*—"Before annexation, had British subjects complete freedom of trade throughout the Transvaal? Were they on the same footing as citizens of the Transvaal?"

240. *Mr. Krüger.*—"They were on the same footing as the burghers. There was not the slightest difference according to the Sand River Convention."

241. *Robinson.*—"I presume you will not object to that continuing?"

242. *Krüger.*—"No, there will be equal protection for everybody."

243. *Sir Evelyn Wood.*—"And equal privileges?"

244. *Krüger.*—"We make no difference so far as burgher rights are concerned. There may, perhaps, *be some slight difference* in the case of a young person who has just come into the country."

The subject of the right of Uitlanders to the franchise was further explained by Dr. Jorissen, one of the Boer deputies.

1037. *Dr. Jorissen.*—"At No. 244 the question was—'Is there any distinction in regard to the privileges or rights of Englishmen in the Transvaal?' and Mr. Krüger answered—'No: there is no difference,' and then he added—'There may be some slight difference in the case of a young person just coming into the country.'

I wish to say that that might give rise to a wrong impression. What Mr. Krüger intended to convey was this: According to our law a new-comer has not his burgher rights immediately. The words 'young person' do not refer to age, but to the time of residence in the Republic. According to our old Grondwet [constitution] *you had to reside a year in the country.*"

Not the slightest grievance could have arisen had rights of citizenship been accorded to the Uitlanders upon these terms, or even upon terms far less liberal. What brought about the raid was that Krüger refused to grant them the franchise on any terms whatsoever. At the beginning of 1899 the position of the Uitlanders had become intolerable, and the intention of Krüger and his Volksraad that it should continue so was so obvious that many thought only war could be the issue. A petition for redress, signed by 21,000 British subjects in the Transvaal, was forwarded to the Queen as Suzerain, and, by the intervention of President Steyn of the Orange Free State, a conference was arranged between President Krüger and Sir Alfred Milner,[1] Governor of the Cape Colony, as an endeavour to arrive at an agreement. The omens were not favourable for an amicable settlement. While preliminaries of the conference were being arranged, a number of Uitlanders were arrested in Johannesburg on a wholly groundless charge of high treason, which, it was afterwards ascertained, had been concocted with the privity of members of the Transvaal Government. However, the conference took place; Sir Alfred Milner met President Krüger at Bloemfontein on 31st May, the chief subject of discussion being the enfranchisement of the Uitlanders; but it broke up without coming to any agreement, owing to Krüger insisting that any concession he might make should be subject to the condition that all differences between the British and Transvaal governments should be referred to the arbitration of a neutral Power. If that were conceded, and not otherwise, he would grant the franchise in two years and a half to immigrants who had resided in the Transvaal since before 1890, but those who had arrived

The Bloemfontein Conference, 31st May–6th June 1899.

[1] Created Viscount Milner in 1902.

after that date would have to wait five years, and any future immigrants would have to wait seven years.[1] Apart from the illiberal nature of this concession, the condition attached to it—reference to a neutral Power—was one that Milner could not entertain for a moment; therefore, as Krüger remained inflexible, the proceedings came to an end on 6th June.

Now when negotiation of this critical kind takes place between two great Powers and is abruptly broken off because agreement is declared impossible, one of two issues is inevitable—war or intervention by a friendly State. But this negotiation was not between two great Powers; it was between a great Power and a small Republic under some kind of vassalage to the great Power. It was hardly conceivable that the South African Republic would measure its strength against Imperial Britain. Nevertheless, the Republic was armed to the teeth; it was at the nod of a President of iron will and dauntless courage; his opponent in the controversy, Mr. Chamberlain, was equally resolute, and very unlikely to abate one jot of his demands. The impression among Afrikanders, Cape Colonists and Uitlanders alike grew strong that powder was going to be burnt over the quarrel.

One man, indeed, remained, or appeared to remain, singularly blind to what was brewing—a man who of all others should have been best qualified to forecast the drift of African politics. Speaking as President of the South African League at the Municipal Hall, Claremont, on 20th July, Cecil Rhodes referred thus to the rumours of war:—

"I should feel alarmed if the Tzar were moving on Pekin, or the French on the Niger territories or Fashoda; but when I am told that President Krüger is causing trouble, I cannot really think about it. It is too ridiculous. If you tell me that the natives of Samoa are giving anxiety to her Majesty's Government, then I will discuss the proposition that the Transvaal is a danger to our Empire."[2]

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[1] Any foreigner coming to the United Kingdom may be naturalised after five years' residence, and exercise the franchise six months later.

[2] Michell's *Life of Cecil Rhodes*, ii. 257.

A month later, after it had become known that 101,000 rifles and 1,293,000 cartridges had been landed at Port Elizabeth and passed through the colony into the Orange Free State, Rhodes expressed to the Cape Assembly his incredulity in the possibility of war. "As for the Transvaal question," he said, "I am perfectly clear that, as I have said before, there is going to be no bloodshed. If Krüger is a sensible man, he will climb down in the end, and there will be a settlement."[1]

Probably Krüger, although nothing was further from his thoughts than "climbing down," agreed with Rhodes in thinking war was improbable. "I know," he had said at a banquet in Pretoria on the German Emperor's birthday in 1895—"I know I may count on the Germans in the future, and I hope Transvaalers will do their best to foster the friendship that exists between them. . . . I feel certain that when the time comes for the Republic to wear larger clothes you [Germans] will have done much to bring it about." Since that time Dr. Leyds had been diligent about the business of the Republic in Berlin. Not to the present generation will it be revealed what manner and what measure of encouragement he received; enough, we may believe, to confirm Krüger in regarding German intervention as a more probable contingency than war with Great Britain. Still, to justify intervention he must prepare openly for war.

After the breakdown at Bloemfontein, the armament of both Republics was pushed forward faster than ever. On 27th July Mr. Chamberlain sent a despatch to Sir Alfred Milner, summing up the requirements of the Queen's Government at considerable length and in most temperate language, deploring the irritation that had arisen between people of kindred race, but insisting firmly upon his intention to exact fair treatment for the Uitlanders.

Warlike preparations, July–Oct. 1899.

"Besides the ordinary obligations of a civilised Power to protect its subjects in a foreign country against injustice, and the special duty arising in this case from the position of her Majesty as the paramount power in South Africa, there falls also on her

[1] Michell's *Life of Cecil Rhodes*, ii. 258.

Majesty's Government the exceptional responsibility arising out of the Conventions which regulate the relations between the Government of the South African Republic and that of her Majesty. These Conventions were granted by her Majesty of her own grace, and they were granted in the full expectation that, according to the categorical assurances conveyed by the Boer leaders to the royal commissioners in the negotiations preliminary to the Convention of 1881, equality of treatment would be strictly maintained among the white inhabitants of the Transvaal."

The military preparation of the Boers and the massing of troops on their frontier rendered corresponding precautions necessary on the part of the British Government. Reinforcements, therefore, were sent out from England—two battalions of infantry, four field batteries and three companies of Engineers on 24th August, and 10,000 of all arms from England, Egypt, and India on 8th September. A corps named the Imperial Light Horse, 1000 strong, was raised among the Uitlanders, and on 7th October Lieut.-General Sir George White, formerly Commander-in-Chief in India, landed to take command of the forces in Natal. By that time the Boer Government had been for some time in possession of the minimum terms that would satisfy the demands of Great Britain. These were embodied in a despatch by Mr. Chamberlain as the result of a decisive Cabinet council on 8th September. After repudiating the claim of the Dutch African Republic to the standing of a sovereign State, such as was the Orange Free State over which Great Britain possessed no right of suzerainty, Chamberlain went on to express the readiness of his Government to accept the five years' residential franchise, as offered in the Boer note of 19th August, coupled with direct representation for the goldfields and equality between English and Boer members of the Volksraad.[1]

Krüger's reply was presented to the British agent at

[1] As Mr. Chamberlain and Sir Alfred Milner were incessantly and bitterly denounced, both in Parliament and from platforms throughout the country, as having forced the Boers to take up arms in resistance to onerous conditions insisted upon by the Colonial Office, the correspondence published in the Transvaal blue books of 1899 should receive the reader's attention. It will there be seen that the tone of the Colonial Office was temperate and conciliatory throughout, and the terms demanded far less liberal than Krüger was pledged to by the Pretoria Convention.

Pretoria on Monday, 9th October, in the shape of an ultimatum. The important matter in it consisted of a demand (1) that all matters in dispute should be referred to arbitration; (2) that British troops on the borders of the Republic should be instantly withdrawn; (3) that all troops landed in South Africa since 1st June should be recalled; and (4) that all British troops which were on the high seas should not be landed anywhere in South Africa. Failing compliance with these four conditions, to be intimated not later than 5 P.M. on Wednesday, 11th October, "this Government will, with great regret, be compelled to regard the action of her Majesty's Government as a formal declaration of war." Mr. Chamberlain received this despatch on the morning of Tuesday, 10th, and at once telegraphed to Milner—

"Her Majesty's Government have received with great regret the peremptory demands of the Government of the South African Republic. . . . You will inform the Government of the South African Republic, in reply, that the conditions demanded by the Government of the South African Republic are such as her Majesty's Government deem it impossible to discuss."

No reply from England having reached the Boer headquarters by Wednesday evening, on the following morning at daybreak a Boer force, 18,000 strong, with fourteen guns, commanded by General Joubert, crossed the frontier of Natal in three columns at wide intervals. The rest of the Boer army was directed against the Cape Colony. In a military sense this separation of a total force of about 50,000, with no reserve, does not commend itself; but political considerations had to be kept in view. Natal, as a whole, was intensely loyal to the British flag, but in Cape Colony the sympathies of the Afrikanders, that is, the Dutch colonists, were largely with their Boer kinsmen, and were known to be ripe for revolt on the first favourable opportunity. Hence the determination to strike simultaneously at both colonies.

The Boers invade Natal, 12th Oct. 1899.

A word as to how far the British forces were prepared for the service now required of them. Sir William Butler, Commander-in-Chief in South Africa, reported early in the

summer that, in the event of war with the Boers, a force of not less than 40,000 would be required. At the end of September the number of troops in South Africa had been raised by reinforcement to 22,000. General Sir William Butler having let it be understood that he could not approve of hostilities against the Boer Republic, was recalled, and General Sir Redvers Buller, V.C., was appointed to command a field force of nearly 50,000, created by the order issued on 7th October for the mobilisation of the First Army Corps and a cavalry division, and the Queen's proclamation calling out 25,000 of the Army Reserve. But Buller and his staff did not reach Cape Town till 31st October, and the first troopships did not arrive there till 9th November. By that time several engagements had taken place, enough to show how greatly the British military authorities had underrated the strength and quality of the enemy, and how little advantage had been taken of the experience gained in the campaign of 1881 to adapt the system of tactics to warfare on the veldt. Since that campaign there had been several years of hard fighting in Egypt against hordes of fearless Dervishes, armed with antiquated weapons, indeed, but very formidable against troops in extended order. The lessons of the Nile campaign had all tended to enhance the importance of the column and square formations and the deadly effect of shrapnel at short range. Besides this recent experience, British tacticians retained unshaken faith in the bayonet as the weapon which had undoubtedly decided many an action from Vimeiro to Inkerman; forgetting that, except in the campaign of 1881 aforesaid, wherein only comparatively small numbers were engaged, British infantry had never been opposed to any enemy equipped with modern arms of precision. It required a further severe and costly schooling to bring about a radical reform in tactics, involving trained intelligence and skilled marksmanship in every individual soldier, with self-reliance enabling him to act effectively when far beyond range of his officer's voice or view.

In the artillery arm, also, the British commanders found themselves at a disadvantage with the enemy; but

they can hardly be blamed for that, seeing that the Boers had no field artillery in 1881. It was not until 1896 that the Transvaal Government began importing from Europe Creusot and Krupp guns of the latest and most powerful design, and set up a shell foundry at Johannesburg under the management of two agents of the Creusot company.[1] All these guns burned smokeless powder, and the heavy "Long Tom" Creusots, throwing shells weighing 103 lbs., though intended for the forts at Pretoria, were afterwards employed in the field. The British Intelligence Department were misled into the belief that the possession of this formidable armament would be to the detriment of the Boer troops through impairing that mobility which, combined with their skill as riflemen, was rightly regarded as their most dangerous quality. It was soon found that, gun for gun, the Boer artillery was superior to the British. The Boer heavy guns could throw shell with fuzes timed to 8750 yards, whereas the extreme range of British field artillery was short of 6000 yards with time fuzes up to only 3360 yards. Moreover, the Boers displayed extraordinary skill in dragging the heaviest ordnance into commanding positions. After the course of the campaign had revealed the inferiority in range of the British guns, the Intelligence and Ordnance Departments had to bear plenty of adverse criticism, professional and otherwise, at the hands of persons who never would have sanctioned the expenditure necessary for so maintaining the army as if the country were chronically on the brink of war; whereas Krüger had never wavered in his purpose to force the issue of war or intervention, and had made his preparations with such grasp and completeness as entitle him to rank as one of the great statesmen of the nineteenth century.

Even the most hostile critics of British military administration, while they were able to hit blots here and there in field tactics, armament and foresight, could not point to a flaw in the work of the War Office once war had been declared. From first to last the Commander-in-Chief of the field force received a free hand; every demand he

[1] In 1899 the Orange State artillery consisted chiefly of Krupp guns of an older pattern, burning black powder, besides ten machine guns.

made for men and material was satisfied; transport, supplies, camp equipment and hospital train were brought to a degree of perfection never attained in any previous campaign. The departments were to be tested as they never had been tested before, and the result, far exceeding in magnitude any effort that Great Britain had ever before been called upon to make, was that an army of 200,000 men was conveyed across 6000 miles of ocean without the loss of a man, far less of a ship, and maintained without privation upon lines of communication unparalleled for any force of similar dimensions, if we except Napoleon's invasion of Russia.

Having thus passed in rapid review the main features in the task the British army was suddenly called upon to perform and the means placed at its disposal, we may now proceed to notice, with necessary brevity, the manner in which that task was accomplished.

When Sir George White arrived in Natal on 7th October, he found that General Sir William Symons had split up his command into detachments, occupying the towns of Glencoe, Dundee, &c. White desired to concentrate at once, and to hold his force of 12,000 ready to strike at the invading columns. Unfortunately he allowed himself to be dissuaded by the Governor of Natal from what would have been sound strategy. Instead of holding the line of the Tugela, he established his headquarters at Ladysmith, a place wholly unfitted for defence,[1] and occupied the roads toward the Free State frontier with strong detachments. General Symons lay with one of these detachments, 4000 horse and foot, at Glencoe (name of sinister remembrance), about forty miles north-east of Ladysmith. His camp was commanded by the heights of Talana, whence, at dawn on 20th October, the Boers suddenly opened fire from six field-pieces. Their strength in numbers was about equal to the British; they were commanded by Lucas Meyer. Symons at once ordered

Campaign opened at Talana, 20th Oct. 1899.

Action at Glencoe, 20th Oct. 1899.

[1] Ladysmith, a railway junction, was commanded by heights on two sides, and Sir Garnet Wolseley has been blamed for choosing it as a magazine and depôt in 1881; but at that time the Boers were without artillery.

an advance to clear the hill, which was done with a loss of 50 killed and 180 wounded, General Symons himself being among the officers killed. Here was learnt the first lesson of the war, namely, that in fighting a nation of marksmen, officers must be stripped of all distinctive marks of rank such as swords, bullion, &c., else must every attacking force be reduced to the state of a leaderless crew. The Boers were trained to pick off officers as carefully as the deer-stalker chooses the best stag in the herd.

In this action the British infantry and artillery extricated themselves from a position in which they should never have been placed; but their success was clouded by the misadventure that befell two troops of the 18th Hussars and some mounted infantry, about 200 in all, which, in endeavouring to outflank the enemy, fell into the arms of another Boer commando in a rough bit of country, and, having lost many killed and wounded and expended all their ammunition, were obliged to surrender.

Midway between Glencoe and Ladysmith is the railway station of Elandslaagte, of which another Boer commando under General Kock had taken possession, cutting the communications between Symons's detachment and headquarters. White ordered General French to retake this position, which he did on the 21st in good style,[1] but owing to the approach of Boer reinforcements, was unable to join hands with General Yule (who had succeeded to Symons's command) at Dundee, and had to fall back upon Ladysmith.

Action at Elandslaagte, 21st Oct. 1899.

The moral effect of these initial successes was satisfactory, tending to keep at home many who were ready to join the Boers had they been victorious; but the strategic position of the British force in Natal was much worse than before. Yule was recalled from Dundee to Ladysmith, which the converging Boer columns were now threatening to invest. White had the alternative of strengthening the defences of the place by entrenchment, or striking at the enemy before the junction of these

[1] Here again the British loss in officers was out of all proportion to that in other ranks. Five officers were killed and 30 wounded (23 per cent.); 50 N.C.O.'s and men killed and 175 wounded (7·5 per cent). The Boers returned their loss at 62 killed, 104 wounded and 184 missing (prisoners).

columns was complete. Choosing the latter course, on the night of 29th October he despatched the Irish Fusiliers and the Gloucester Regiment, with a mountain battery, under Colonel Carleton, to occupy Nicholson's Nek, a long ridge about six miles north of the town, intending it as a protection to his left flank while he advanced against the Boer centre about three miles to the east. His attack was repulsed, and, what was far worse, Carleton's little brigade, about 1000 strong, had the misfortune to lose their guns and all their spare ammunition through a stampede of the mules. Attacked by greatly superior numbers, they held out for six hours, when, having spent their last cartridge and lost one-fifth of their number, they surrendered.

Surrender of Colonel Carleton's detachment, 30th Oct. 1899.

The outcome of the first fortnight's fighting in the eastern theatre of war was that General White with his whole force was closely shut up in Ladysmith, which was being bombarded daily from a distance beyond the range of British guns; the British had lost 1200 prisoners and the guns of a mountain battery, and had taken two guns and 300 prisoners from the enemy. These rough-bearded, slouching, sunburnt farmers in their homespun and broadcloth looked less like soldiers than Highland crofters; but their excessive mobility and scientific rifle practice convinced our people that they had to deal with mounted infantry of the most formidable description, and with artillery far more powerful than their own. Meanwhile, the projected British advance upon Pretoria and Bloemfontein had been effectually checked.

Siege of Ladysmith, 31st Oct. 1899–28th Feb. 1900.

Against the unfavourable features in the eastern situation there was little of a brighter character to be set in the western. In both districts the question had come to be whether some terrible disaster to British arms could be averted until such time as the reinforcements already on their way from England could be brought to the front to redress the numerical inequality between the combatants.

On the west the Boers had invaded Cape Colony in two columns, one, under General Cronje, directed against Mafeking in the extreme north-east corner of the colony;

the other, under Wessels and Botha, had invested Kimberley, about 200 miles south of Mafeking, both places being stations on the main line from Cape Town to Bulawayo. In wasting their time and force over these sieges, they let slip a golden opportunity which was never to return. Had these generals masked Mafeking and Kimberley with a few hundred men to each, and pushed on southwards, the Afrikanders of Cape Colony would have risen *en masse* to join them; they might have seized the railway bridge at Orange River station commanding the route to the north, as well as the important railway junctions at Naauwpoort and de Aar at any time before the end of October. For de Aar, especially, it would have repaid any effort to make a dash, for at that place there was an immense accumulation of stores and ammunition, with thousands of mules, the whole defended by a single battalion without guns. The neglect of this grand chance by generals who, as was shown later, were by no means deficient in strategic talent, is the more unaccountable, because it was well known at the time that the Dutch in Cape Colony were only waiting for a favourable turn of affairs to rise against the British.

Faulty strategy of Cronje and Botha, Oct. 1899.

At the end of October the British force on the Orange River was still less than 3000, scattered along a front of sixty miles. Lord Methuen, who had been given command of the first division, arrived at Orange River station, about 600 miles from Cape Town, on 12th November, and received orders from Redvers Buller to advance to the relief of Kimberley. But of Methuen's division only the Guards Brigade had arrived at Cape Town. Disembarking on the 12th and 13th, they were sent off to join their General at Orange River, and with them a brigade formed of the troops in garrison at Cape Town, a naval brigade 400 strong with 4 guns, two companies of Engineers, the 9th Lancers and 100 Rimington's Scouts. With this force, about 7500 in all and 16 guns, he advanced to attack the Boers at Belmont before sunrise on the 23rd. By 7.30 A.M. the Boers had been driven from their position in the hills after a sharp action, in which Methuen lost 4 officers and 71 men killed, 21

Battle of Belmont, 23rd Nov. 1899.

officers and 270 men wounded. The Boer loss was reckoned at about one hundred, besides fifty prisoners.[1]

Methuen resumed the advance along the railway on the 24th, fighting a successful action at Enslin on the 25th, which cost him about two hundred in killed and wounded chiefly in the Naval Brigade, which had the honour of the day. While he was thus driving Cronje before him, the British general was threatened by Boer commandos on his flanks, which he estimated at 8000 men with 8 guns. He had to fight another engagement on the 28th, where the crossing of the Modder River was held against him; but again Cronje was driven back, and now the relieving force was within sound of the guns of Kimberley. So far, the experience of the western force had been the same in one respect as that of the eastern, namely, the excessive casualties among officers. In his three engagements with these formidable sharpshooters Methuen had lost 58 officers and 905 men. His fighting power was further diminished by the necessity for detaching strong parties to protect his lengthening line of communication, which had been temporarily broken by the destruction of the railway and telegraph at Graspan. Learning, therefore, by heliograph from Kimberley that the garrison were in no immediate jeopardy, he determined to rest his men and await reinforcements. It is now known that the Boers were greatly discouraged by the result of the fighting, and that had Methuen advanced at once he might have attacked the besieging force round Kimberley without more ado. Cronje employed these days of grace in entrenching his troops on the heights of Magersfontein. Strengthened by the arrival of the magnificent Highland Brigade, the 12th Lancers, and a battery of Horse Artillery, Methuen, having shelled these heights vigorously on 9th December,[2] on the

[1] The Boer force engaged at Belmont was not more than half as strong as Methuen's, but they had the advantage of being posted on steep and difficult ground, overlooking the open across which the British had to advance.

[2] One of the earliest lessons in this campaign was the disappointing effect of shrapnel upon troops scattered and sheltered among boulders. The Boers, it is said, lost only three men in the reconnaissance of the 9th December. Moreover, the British fire was directed chiefly to the upper parts of the heights, whereas it was found afterwards that their trenches were drawn round the base of the hill.

afternoon of the following day, Sunday, sent forward the Highland Brigade, with cavalry and artillery, under Brigadier Andrew Wauchope to bivouac within three miles of the Boer entrenchments. It was intensely dark and raining heavily when at 12.30 A.M. on the 11th the brigade fell in and advanced in mass of quarter-columns, the intention being to deploy for attack when within half a mile of the enemy. The plan miscarried. The Highlanders, moving in their dense and unwieldy formation, suddenly received a withering fire at point-blank on their front and right flank. The distance had been miscalculated in the dark, and the leading companies of the Black Watch had come in contact with the enemy, believing him to be still several hundred yards distant. It is certain that had the charge been sounded at once, the Boers would have bolted from their very weak entrenchments, as they had done at Belmont, and the affair would have been over in ten minutes. Unluckily, an attempt was made to deploy, which threw the whole brigade into confusion. Wauchope, his orderly officer and the officer commanding the Black Watch (the leading battalion) were all shot down within 150 yards of the Boer trenches, and the troops, densely packed in the darkness, suffered severely. Those companies that could extricate themselves charged pell-mell, and the Seaforths extended the firing line to the right and left. Soon after 4 A.M. the British guns came into play with good effect. The Gordon Highlanders (not included in the Highland Brigade) made an independent attack, but, not being supported, had to fall back after suffering severely. Had the Guards Brigade been used to enforce the attack, the position must have been carried. Instead of this, Methuen, who was on Headquarter Hill, two miles and a half distant from the fighting line, only knew that the Highlanders' attack had not been driven home. At 6 A.M. he sent orders to the senior officer of the Highland Brigade to hold his position, and instructed General Sir H. Colvile, commanding the Guards Brigade, to cover the right flank of the Highlanders. The Guards did, indeed, come into action

Battle of Magersfontein, 11th Dec. 1899.

later; and the Boers drew off some of the troops in their right defences to strengthen their left. This was a good opportunity for General Pole-Carew, who was guarding the railway with two battalions and Rimington's Guides, to move forward and enfilade the enemy's trenches; but at midday he received an order to remain where he was. By this time the Highlanders had been in action for ten hours. Drenched with rain in the darkness, exposed without water to a blistering sun in the daylight, they had eaten no proper meal for twenty-four hours; they had lost their general and one-third of their number. Crouching in what shelter could be found, a man had but to show his head or a limb to draw a rain of Mauser bullets upon him. Men were wounded twice, thrice and four times. The end came about 1.30 P.M., when a party of the enemy managed to establish themselves on the right flank of the Highlanders. Beginning from the right, the whole brigade commenced falling back. Methuen sent the Scots Guards, which he held in reserve, to arrest the movement, but just at that moment the Boer guns opened fire, and the retreat became a rout. The Guards Brigade still held their ground near the enemy, and bitterly did General Colvile remonstrate against Methuen's decision to retire upon the Modder, the deciding factor being that the artillery had expended all their ammunition. Sore in spirit, Colvile obeyed the order to retire, marching back his matchless battalions as proudly and steadily under fire of the Boer guns as if it had been a parade movement in Hyde Park.

A word must be said here in justice to Lord Methuen, who was much blamed at the time for making a frontal attack across a bare plain upon a strongly entrenched position. There was plenty of room, urged his critics, to enable him to leave Magersfontein on his right or left, keeping Kimberley as his objective. These critics seem to have forgotten that his line of communication lay along the railway. To preserve that intact was a primary necessity; the direction of his advance was not a matter for his choice. The error lay in not supporting the attacking column.

The disaster of Magersfontein was black enough,[1] and the news parted with none of its gloom in transmission to England, where it raised a storm of mingled shame and anger—shame, because our two *corps d'élite*, the Guards and Highland Brigades, had been worsted in the field by a horde of rough farmers, with the world looking on—anger, because anger is always the meed of an unsuccessful general.

Howbeit, disaster to a single division may be retrieved, or at least balanced, by the success of other divisions. Let Magersfontein be acknowledged as a reverse (a term much in fashion during this dark London winter,[2] being more digestible by a proud public than "defeat"), and let us turn for encouragement to the columns operating independently—Buller's in distant Natal and Gatacre's in the wide district between that colony and the Pretoria-Port Elizabeth railway.

First as to Gatacre's column, nominally a division, but reduced by reinforcements sent to Methuen and Buller to a brigade of two strong battalions, two batteries of field artillery and 500 mounted infantry—less than 3000 men in all. With these troops he advanced against a body of Boers holding the railway junction at Stormberg. Gatacre was a very fire-eater, with a reputation earned in Egypt for exacting the uttermost out of his men—"General Backacher" they learnt to call him—yet he seems to have spared them unwisely in one respect. If ever there was a country in which, and a people against whom, careful reconnoitring was indispensable, that country is the African veldt and that people the Boers. Yet had Gatacre been one of those Turkish pashas who, any time since the invention of gunpowder, went to his doom in the uplands of Montenegro, he could scarcely have been more negligent in this essential precaution.

Entraining his column at Sterkstroom on the afternoon

[1] Only seven out of Methuen's thirteen battalions were actively engaged at Magersfontein—about 7300 in all. The losses were 23 officers and 149 men killed; 45 officers and 646 men wounded; 108 men missing—say 13 per cent. The Boers lost only about 250 killed and wounded, or less than 5 per cent. of their force of 6000.

[2] In London it was midwinter, but it was midsummer in South Africa.

of 9th December, he detrained at Molteno, ten miles south of Stormberg, and started on a night march for the attack on that station. The column never reached its objective. It lost the way in the pitchy night, and at four o'clock on the bright morning of the 10th, marched straight into an ambuscade ensconced on the hillsides. Gatacre was beaten back to Sterkstroom with a loss of only 28 killed and 61 wounded, but he left 634 prisoners with the victorious Boers.

Gatacre's reverse at Stormberg, 10th Dec. 1899.

Herein was nothing to redeem the simultaneous misfortune at Magersfontein, whereof the news made Redvers Buller doubly anxious to accomplish something to restore confidence. Since 3rd November railway and telegraphic communication with Ladysmith had been broken; since the 10th the Boers had occupied Colenso and the line of the Tugela, only twelve miles south of Ladysmith. Buller, it will be remembered, was Commander-in-Chief of the whole South African field force; his presence with the Natal column was owing to the supreme importance of releasing General White from Ladysmith, and of course seriously interfered with, if it did not altogether annul, General Sir F. Clery's responsibility as divisional commander.[1]

This Second Division of the First Army Corps had been greatly strengthened at the expense of the other two, especially Gatacre's Third Division. Clery had sixteen battalions in four brigades, two regiments of regular cavalry, seven companies of mounted infantry, five field batteries, a Naval Brigade, and a field company of Engineers: in all 16,000 splendid troops (2600 mounted), 44 guns and 16 machine guns. There were no serviceable maps of the district, nor had the ground north of the Tugela been reconnoitred; this only was manifest that, whereas the country on the south bank was bare and open, that on the north side rose steeply ridge beyond ridge. The Boers under Louis Botha had evacuated Colenso, and were supposed to have taken up an excellently defensive position among the heights on the north bank.

[1] Buller arrived in Clery's camp at Chieveley on 5th December, but did not personally assume the command. Clery had been Professor of Tactics at Sandhurst 1872–75, and served on the Staff in the Zulu and Egyptian campaigns.

Buller himself reconnoitred this position from the south bank on 6th and 8th December. He drew no fire and saw no Boers, though some tents were visible. He came to the conclusion that the position was weakly held, and that no formidable opposition would be offered to his crossing the river by a turning movement, marching by his left, to the Tugela at Potgieter's Drift.

On 11th December Buller informed General White in Ladysmith by heliograph that he was going to attack the enemy on the 17th, and White made arrangements to co-operate with him. For some reason which has never been explained, he changed his mind on the very evening that this message was sent, *and omitted to notify the change to White.* Apparently his impression that the enemy's position on the north bank would be weakly held had altered to one that it was not, or would not be, held at all; and this belief was confirmed after the naval guns had bombarded the northern heights with lyddite shells throughout the whole of 13th and 14th December without drawing a single shot in reply from the enemy.

Redvers Buller then directed General Clery to prepare for a frontal attack on the position at daybreak on the 15th; and, having approved of Clery's dispositions, intended to view the operations as a spectator. It is impossible without a map to give an intelligible account of the engagement which followed; it may be studied in several military histories of the war by competent hands.[1] One feature, however, in the relative positions of the combatants cannot be left without notice in the most cursory account of the battle of Colenso. When Louis Botha withdrew his force of 6000 to the north bank of the Tugela, he left a detachment of 800 on Hlangwane Hill, a steep bluff on the south bank which abruptly forces the river from an easterly to a northerly direction. From the summit of this hill, not only was a wide survey to be had of the enemy's position, but that position might have been

Battle of Colenso, 15th Dec. 1899.

[1] For a succinct and critical record of the campaign the reader is recommended to the work prepared in the historical section of the Great General Staff, Berlin, whereof an authorised English translation has been made by Col. W. H. H. Waters.

rendered untenable by an enfilade from powerful guns. All authorities are agreed that this hill was the key of the position, and that it was a grievous mistake not to insist on its possession before the attack on the northern heights was delivered.[1] It is true that Lord Dundonald was sent with some cavalry and guns to occupy it; but, finding it to be held more strongly than, through neglect of reconnoitring, had been known to the British staff, when he sent to ask General Barton for reinforcement it was refused, Barton not daring to comply without the divisional general's authority.

The British front extended about seven miles to the west of Hlangwane. Upon this front at 4 A.M. Clery sent forward three brigades, supported by a fourth, to force the passage of the Tugela at different points. The enemy was still completely invisible, for Botha's orders that not a shot was to be fired from gun or rifle until the British were crossing the river, were obeyed with exemplary fidelity. When the naval guns opened at 5 A.M., searching the heights with lyddite shells with an accuracy that convinced the staff that no troops, however well concealed, could hold their ground under such a fire, it was believed that the Boers had decamped in the night. Colonel Long, who had been told off to support the main attack with two field batteries, was a dashing officer of Egyptian renown. He had to learn the difference between Boers and Dervishes. Instead of supporting the infantry by unlimbering at a reasonable range, he dashed ahead of it and opened fire when about 600 yards from the river. It was now six o'clock on a brilliant morning. At last, a single shell came hissing from the opposite height. It was Botha's prearranged signal; and like magic the enemy sprang into being, still unseen, because of smokeless powder, but now both heard and felt. At seven o'clock Long, having lost 5 officers and 32 men, withdrew the

[1] A young officer, a near relative of the present writer, being with Methuen's column on the day before the battle of Colenso, was discussing with the adjutant of a South African corps, who knew the country well, Buller's chances in forcing the passage of the Tugela. The adjutant drew a sketch of the position before Colenso, showing Hlangwane as the key. He explained that the attack would probably fail unless Buller first secured that hill, which enfiladed the Boer position and would assure a safe crossing.

rest to cover, leaving the guns, for an intolerable rifle fire at short range shot down men and horses as fast as they were exposed. Long himself was severely wounded. Buller now, abandoning the rôle of spectator, assumed command of the army and fiercely insisted upon Long's guns being recovered. Again and again the attempt was made, and many lives were lost in the hail from Mausers and Maxims each time it was renewed. Meanwhile the infantry had come into action; the West Surrey and Devonshire battalions had poured such a hot fire across the river at Colenso as to force the Boers out of their foremost trenches. Had Buller left the affair in Clery's hands the initial check must have been overcome; but he was appalled at the magnitude of his own miscalculation. He had reckoned upon *une affaire d'un déjeuner*,[1] and had found an enemy whom it would need all his skill and force to dislodge. Ten of his guns had been put out of action;[2] men and horses sent to withdraw them had been shot down time after time. He treated these guns as lost, whereas they were in no sense lost, for the Boers dared not touch them so long as they were covered by the British fire. The temporary disablement of these batteries by a surprise was one of those incidents which may befall the most cautious General, especially at the outset of a campaign.[3] Ten out of Buller's sixteen battalions had not been engaged. He had but to suspend the action during the heat of the day, as Wellesley did at Talavera, to drive the Boer commando from Hlangwane in the afternoon (which ought to have been done in the morning before

[1] On the morning of Waterloo, Napoleon discussing with Soult his order of battle, exclaimed: "Parceque vous avez été battu par Wellington, vous le regardez comme un grand général. Et, moi, je vous dis que Wellington est un mauvais général, que les Anglais sont de mauvaises troupes, et que ce sera l'affaire d'un déjeuner."—"Je le souhaite!" replied Soult.

[2] Two of the guns had been recovered. Buller having called for volunteers to save them, Corporal Nurse and some others responded, and were led through the deadly fire by three young officers on the General's staff—Congreve, Schofield, and Roberts. The survivors managed to bring back two guns; but Lord Roberts lost there his only son, and Congreve was left behind desperately wounded.

[3] A somewhat similar mishap befell the artillery of the 18th German division and the artillery of the 9th corps on 18th August 1870, near Verneville, when the gunners were surprised by French infantry fire in front, on the left flank and partly in rear, at about 1000 yards range.

attacking the main position), and his superior force must have ensured victory. But although Buller had not lost his guns, he had lost what was far more important—his nerve. At eleven o'clock he ordered the attack to be suspended, recalled the fighting line, and so, full of angry thoughts and with heavy hearts, the whole force retreated to Chieveley. The British General had the humiliation of asking for an armistice to bring in his wounded and bury his dead. His loss amounted to 7 officers and 138 men killed, 43 officers and 719 men wounded, 21 officers and 199 men missing.

The tale of shame is not complete. Incredible as it may seem, Buller heliographed to White in Ladysmith informing him that he could undertake no further attempt to relieve him for another month, and advising him to burn his cyphers, destroy his guns, and make the best terms possible for his garrison with the Boers! Incredible —aye, and so it seemed to Sir George White, who tossed this message aside, believing it to be a ruse of the enemy.

On the same day Buller sent a desponding telegram to the War Office. " . . . My opinion is that I must let Ladysmith go, and take up a good defensive position in Southern Natal in order to let time come to our assistance. But that is a step about which I must first ask your advice. I reckon that 20,000 men were opposed to me to-day. They had the advantage of me in weapons as well as in position. They admit that they have suffered severely, but my people have not seen a single dead Boer." Now Botha had only 6000 or 8000 men on the heights above Colenso, and his total loss in the two days' bombardment and during the assault was 6 killed and 21 wounded.

There is no duty more distasteful than that of pronouncing censure upon a brave commander with a brilliant record to his credit. About the personal courage of Redvers Buller there has never been a shadow of suspicion. He exposed himself at Colenso in a manner which no Commander-in-Chief ought to do; indeed it was merely by luck that the wound he received was a slight one. No general commanded more surely the confidence of the

British public; he belonged to the modern school of tacticians, and had earned a fine reputation for skill and boldness in handling troops in action. But a vigorous appetite, a dauntless digestion, and an educated palate had wrought their effect upon his faculties.

> "Serpens, sitis, ardor, arenæ,
> Gaudia virtutis."

If advancing years are not to clog the intellect and slacken the nerves, the physical system must be strung to discipline. To hold his own in modern warfare, a commander's intellect and nerves must be alert in every fibre.

CHAPTER XIII

Lord Roberts appointed to the chief command—Second attempt to relieve Ladysmith—Battle of Spion Kop—Third attempt to relieve Ladysmith—Final advance on Ladysmith—Relief of Ladysmith—Relief of Kimberley—Battle of Paardeberg—Surrender of General Cronje—Capture of Bloemfontein—Relief of Mafeking—Annexation of Orange State—Spragge's Yeomanry surrender at Lindley—Surrender of Pretoria—Buller drives the Boers out of Natal—Annexation of the Transvaal—Conclusion of the war—Queen Victoria visits Ireland—Her last acts of State—Her death.

At the outset of the war in South Africa the Government received support from the nation and from the Liberal Opposition as nearly unanimous as it is possible for people to be upon any question. Lord Rosebery, as leader of the Liberal party, wrote on 11th October that although there was room for criticism, if not for condemnation, in the transactions of the Government with the Transvaal during the three preceding years, yet "that is all over for the present. It is needless to discuss how we could best have attained our simple and reasonable object of rescuing our fellow-countrymen in the Transvaal from intolerable conditions of subjection and injustice, and of securing equal rights for the white races in South Africa, for an ultimatum has been addressed to Great Britain by the South African Republic which is in itself a declaration of war." He finished the letter to his correspondent in a sentence which caused considerable stir among members of his party. "Without attempting to judge the policy which concluded peace after the reverse of Majuba Hill, I am bound to state my profound conviction that there is no conceivable Government in this country which could repeat it."

Mr. Asquith was even more outspoken.

"The issue," said he, speaking at Dundee on the same day as his chief was writing—"the issue raised by the ill-inspired despatch of the Transvaal Government is simply this: has Great

Britain, the paramount power in South Africa, the right to secure for her subjects in the Transvaal the same equality of treatment as is voluntarily granted to Dutch and English alike in every other part of South Africa? . . . The thinking people in this country see in this war little or no prospect either of material advantage or military glory. . . . It is not with a light heart that they take up the challenge that has been thrown down, but now that it has been forced upon them they will see it through to the end."

It is true that a week later what was entitled a national memorial against the war, with 53,833 signatures attached to it, was presented to the Prime Minister; but in heart and voice the country was overpoweringly of opinion that war could not have been avoided. Parliament, when it was called together on 17th October, would have been practically unanimous in support of the measures necessary for carrying on the war but for the presence of the Irish Nationalists. Mr. Dillon's hostile amendment to the Address was rejected by 322 to 44; but on 18th October Mr. Philip Stanhope secured the support of enough Radicals for a motion of censure upon "the conduct of negotiations in the Transvaal" to enable him to take 135 members into the lobby against 362 who supported Ministers. Two days later a vote for 35,000 additional men and ten millions of money was carried by 200 to 35.

Parliament had been prorogued a fortnight before the bad news began coming in from the front. The week of 10th to 17th December was the darkest in living memory. We had lost 3000 men and 12 guns within a week; nor was that the gravest feature in the case. Four picked generals—White, Methuen, Gatacre, and Redvers Buller had met with defeat at the hands of what Englishmen had been taught to reckon as irregular troops, and albeit the aggregate loss in men was trifling, its effect was intensified by the instantaneous transmission of news, bringing home to the public the stern realities of wounds and death, with a vivid insistence upon details most trying to fortitude.

The nation took its punishment nobly. While the continental press cackled its content at the humiliation of the British army, the Queen's Government and her people set themselves to retrieve these reverses at any sacrifice.

The Army Reserve, about which many experienced officers had expressed doubt whether it would put in an appearance when wanted, rejoined the colours almost to a man, which appears the more praiseworthy when it is remembered that the great majority of these men had found civil employment or had set up in business since being discharged. As for volunteers, the difficulty of the War Office was, not to find enough, but to insist upon a physical standard of efficiency. Young men of every class, from the highest to the lowest, vied in eagerness for a service which was now well understood to be both arduous and dangerous. At Llyn Cowlyd, a desolate spot in Merionethshire, the Gorsedd sword was ceremonially drawn for the first time during hundreds of years, and the chief bard invoked the blessing of the Almighty on British arms, and declared that the Gorsedd would not be returned to the scabbard until they were victorious. Nor was the enthusiasm confined to the mother country. The Canadian House of Commons, by 119 votes to 10, approved of the despatch of a strong contingent to the seat of war. In the general election which took place in the Dominion during the summer, each party, Ministerialist and Opposition, claimed to be more loyal to the Crown than the other, and to have had the greater share in supporting the war with men and money. So also in Australasia; every colony sent forth contingents in quick succession, many of these excellent troops being raised and equipped by private effort without being subsidised by the Government. In New Zealand, the most distant of the Australasian group from the seat of war, it was remarked that Irishmen were the most eager for enlistment. This manifestation of patriotic devotion to the flag far exceeded what the most sanguine imperialist, even Mr. Chamberlain himself, can have expected from men not directly concerned in the quarrel.[1]

Immediately after the news from Colenso arrived, the Seventh Division (10,000 men) received orders to embark for Cape Town, the remaining Army Reserves were called out,

[1] The spirit shown by the Colonies in this war greatly stimulated the growing movement for preferential imperial trading, whereof Mr. Chamberlain was about to become such a strenuous advocate.

an Eighth Division was formed for service, eleven Militia battalions and a large force of Volunteers and Imperial Yeomanry were ordered to the front. The result of these measures was to put in the field a force (including Colonial contingents) of 170,000 to 200,000 men, far the largest army that had ever left the shores of Great Britain.

The command of this splendid host was not committed to Redvers Buller. He was not recalled from the front, as he surely would have been had the truth about Colenso been as well understood as it was afterwards; he was continued in command of operations in Natal, and Lord Roberts was appointed Commander-in-Chief, with Lord Kitchener as Chief of the Staff. Some wonder was expressed at the time, and may still be felt, that such an immense army should be deemed necessary to cope with a nation which, at the outside, could not put more than 50,000 or 60,000 rifles in the field; but, as the result was to prove, there was not a man or a gun too many for dealing with an enemy of extraordinary mobility in a region of perfect natural aptitude for defence equal in area to the whole of Germany and France put together. Thus, when Lord Roberts landed at Cape Town on 10th January 1900, he found the British field force in four main divisions upon a front of about 500 miles. Of the two strongest of these, Methuen's had been encamped on the Modder ever since his defeat at Magersfontein,[1] and Buller's was still encamped at Chieveley; while General French at Rensburg and General Gatacre at Sterkstroom owed it solely to the want of unanimity among the Boer generals that they were able to prevent commanders acting independently of each other from penetrating further into Cape Colony and causing a general rising of the Afrikanders.

Lord Roberts appointed Commander-in-Chief, Dec. 1899.

The first care of the new Commander-in-Chief was to render the field force more mobile by improving the transport organisation, so as to render the troops less dependent on the railway, and causing every battalion to form a company

[1] The command of the Highland Brigade, vacant through Wauchope's death, had been given to General Hector Macdonald (known to his men as "Fighting Mac"), the son of a Highland crofter, having risen from the ranks and greatly distinguished himself in Indian frontier war.

of mounted infantry. In addition he formed several corps of irregular cavalry—Roberts's Horse, Kitchener's Horse, Nesbitt's Horse, &c., partly raised in Cape Colony[1] and partly of volunteers from other colonies and from England. Lord Roberts perceived at once that the only means of retrieving what had been lost was to take the offensive at once and carry the war into the enemy's country. Making Bloemfontein his objective, he decided upon advancing by the Modder and Kimberley, a route which ensured a safe water supply (a matter of constant anxiety in South Africa), and also lay through a country less difficult than the alternative routes by Springfontein or through Natal.

The relief of Ladysmith, therefore, was left to Buller with the Natal army. That general continued to display deplorable inactivity. At daybreak on 6th January the sound of heavy firing at Ladysmith was heard in the Chieveley camp, showing that Joubert was delivering a vigorous assault. At 7 A.M. Buller began to receive urgent messages by heliograph from Sir George White, informing him that troops had been withdrawn from Colenso to reinforce the besiegers, that he was very hard pressed. These messages continued to arrive till past midday, yet Buller made no move. At last, unable to disregard the murmurs in his own staff, he ordered General Clery to make a demonstration against the position of Colenso.[2] Five battalions and three batteries marched out of Chieveley at 2 P.M.; the battalions extended under cover of artillery fire, advanced within 2000 yards of the enemy, lay there for an hour without firing a shot, and then marched back to Chieveley! These bluffing tactics deceived nobody and did no good. It has never been explained why Buller did not seize this occasion to carry out the turning movement by Potgieter's Drift, as originally planned and as carried out a few days later. Making all allowance for the difficulty of maintaining

Second attempt to relieve Ladysmith, 9th Jan. 1900.

[1] Brabant's Horse and the Kaffrarian Rifles, 3000 in all, were raised in Cape Colony and sent to reinforce General Gatacre before the end of January.

[2] "I sent every available man *to produce the impression of an attack* on Colenso, with the object of holding there as many of the enemy as possible." (Sir Redvers Buller before the Commission of Inquiry.)

supplies and communications, which, after all, was not enhanced by the presence of an enemy on either flank, it can only be understood that the crippling influence was that which wrought too frequently during this war, namely, the fear of losses—a kind of fear without the slightest taint of personal cowardice, simply dread of the effect which a heavy casualty list would have upon the public mind. British generals have become so nervous upon this score that they are inclined to shrink from paying the price necessary to ensure victory. If the public could only be got to believe that heavy loss in a successful action may be far cheaper and more merciful than cumulative smaller losses in attacks that are not pushed home, as was the case at Magersfontein and Colenso, the field force as a whole would be less exposed to mortality from disease in campaigns prolonged through an over-sensitive avoidance of bloodshed.

On 9th January the Natal army was reinforced by the arrival at Frere camp (within five miles of Chieveley) of the Fifth Division, under Lieut.-General Sir Charles Warren, bringing up its effective strength to 27,000 men with 76 guns; and Buller at once issued orders for a flank march of the whole army to the left, in order to cross the Tugela at Potgieter's Drift in a second attempt to force the way to Ladysmith. The roads were very heavy owing to much rain; the transport waggons travelled by the same roads as the troops, thereby making them almost impassable; it brought the British system of campaigning into strange contrast with that of the agile enemy that it actually took the army five days to march a distance of twenty-two miles. As well, one might say, set a team of oxen to catch a flight of starlings.

All notion of surprising the enemy by the flank march, as had been intended, was now out of the question; the Boers had plenty of time to extend their line to the west, and mustered so strongly upon the heights opposite Potgieter's Drift that Buller considered it expedient to avoid a frontal attack, and ordered Warren (who was senior to Clery) to take the Second Division across the river, with a brigade of his own (the Fifth) Division, all his divisional

artillery and all the cavalry except a couple of squadrons, and to move by his left into the open country north of Spion Kop, Buller, with the remainder of the army, undertaking to keep the enemy's attention engaged during the movement. As at Colenso, he left the precise direction of the movement entirely to the divisional general, interfering later, with no good effect, when misunderstanding had caused things to go wrong.

Buller's detachment effected a crossing without loss on the 16th; but its subsequent movements partook too transparently of the nature of a demonstration to draw off the enemy's attention from Warren's column, which crossed on the 17th and 18th by two bridges erected by the Engineers at Trichardt's Drift, including a train of 489 waggons fifteen miles long! The country upon which Warren now had to operate had never been reconnoitred. The task of the Boers was to defend a line of front eleven miles long, which, even with their limited numbers, they were enabled to do through their extreme mobility, acting in a country with splendid facilities for cover.

"The whole position from Vaalkrantz to Thaba Myama might be compared to a mighty escarp wall, of which the advanced flanking works were furnished by those two heights, and of which Spion Kop forms an elevated central bastion."[1]

It was, in fact, a sort of ready-made Torres Vedras, of which the Boers, always more fertile in defensive measures than in initiative, were diligent in improving the natural features by intrenchment.

Just as Buller had handed over the command of the attack to Warren on 15th January, so Warren on the evening of the 19th instructed General Clery to advance against the Boer position by a series of enveloping attacks; and Clery, in turn, on the morning of the 20th charged General Hart with the conduct of the attack on the heights of Thaba Myama. The assault was maintained from daybreak till dark, when the troops were withdrawn. The 21st and 22nd were spent in bombarding the position of

[1] *German Official Account of the War*, translated by Col. H. du Cane, vol. ii. p. 89.

the enemy, with better result than usual, for it cleared the Boers out of their intrenchments, although this could not be apparent to the assailants. On the 21st White heliographed to Buller, offering to make a sortie if he were informed of the time fixed for the main attack. Buller gave him no such information, probably because he was quite uncertain about the course events at the front might take. Ah! had he but known—had he but known to *frapper juste*. A German who was with the Boers made this entry in his diary on the 22nd:—

"I see how our people are coming away from the position. It is almost enfiladed by the howitzers, which simply blow away the intrenchments. All is lost if the British make an assault now. There is not a man in the trenches. But the Vierkleur still flies proudly aloft, and this, of course, deceives the British."

After holding a council of war, Warren determined to abandon the wide out-flanking movement, and to attack Spion Kop on the night of 23rd and 24th January. Buller, riding over from headquarters on the morning of the 23rd, expressed himself much displeased with Warren's inactivity, and wrote to the War Office a bitter complaint about that General's dispositions. Not a satisfactory state of relations between these two commanders in presence of the enemy! However, the attack on Spion Kop was allowed to proceed, although Buller interfered to substitute General Woodgate to command it instead of General Coke, who had received Warren's orders, but was still lame from the consequences of a broken leg. No troops were put in order to support Woodgate's column of attack, which consisted of two battalions and a half—about 1500 men. It moved off about 8.30 P.M., and began the ascent about 10 P.M. About 4 A.M. on the 24th the British were in possession of the table-land on the summit after a brief scuffle, in which they lost only ten killed and wounded, and set to work to intrench themselves in the dark.[1] So soon as it was light, and the dense fog had cleared away, General Botha prepared to recapture the

Battle of Spion Kop, Jan. 1900.

[1] The summit was but weakly held by a detachment of Boers and Krantz's Germans.

Kop, and concentrated a heavy fire of artillery upon it. Nevertheless, no movement was made by Warren to support Woodgate's people, except by gun and rifle fire from Three Tree Hill. At ten o'clock came a heliograph message from the summit: "Reinforce at once or all is lost. General dead."

Gradually Botha had pushed up fresh troops under cover of his guns, and these, creeping from rock to rock, poured in a deadly fire at short range upon Woodgate's men crowded on the summit. General Woodgate himself and Colonel Blomfield, commanding the Lancashire Fusiliers, were among the first to fall. Three battalions were sent forward at once, under command of General Coke. Buller, from the south bank of the Tugela, seeing the troops on the summit of Spion Kop falling back, heliographed to Warren to transfer the command there "to some really good hard-fighting man. I propose Thorneycroft." Warren complied, passing on the order to Spion Kop, but forgot to make Coke aware that Thorneycroft, who was greatly junior in rank to that general, had been placed in command, and this led to unintelligible confusion when Coke reached the plateau. Meanwhile more and more infantry were being sent up to reinforce the troops on the summit; but infantry was not the kind of reinforcement required. There were too many of that arm in the confined space already. A subaltern of artillery had reported that it was impossible to take guns up that hill. Those who witnessed the way in which the Boers managed to plant their heavy Long Toms on the top of the steepest heights have expressed incredulity as to this impossibility, and in fact before the conclusion of the action guns had been taken half-way up. Anyhow Botha expected the British guns to open fire from Spion Kop at any moment, and was well aware that he would then have to desist from all attempts to recover it.

Warren, being very imperfectly informed of what was going on upon the summit, made no attempt to relieve the pressure on Thorneycroft's men by extending the attack to other parts of the Boer position. Had he done so, the day must almost certainly have been won, and the road to Ladysmith laid open; for, with all their mobility, the Boers

could not with 6000 or 7000 troops have adequately manned the whole of their front against the resolute advance of 20,000 British. Unfortunately, over-anxiety to keep down the casualty list interfered to prevent Buller reaping the fruit of the sacrifice already incurred upon Spion Kop.

The end may be told in a few words. By 1.30 P.M. there were about 4000 British infantry on the summit of Spion Kop, closely packed, suffering heavily from an intolerable fire of shrapnel and musketry, as well as from parching thirst. Coke heliographed to Warren that unless the enemy's guns could be silenced, the position must be abandoned. About 6 P.M. Coke and Thorneycroft, each still believing himself to be in command, reported independently to Warren that the hill could no longer be held; and Coke left the summit in order to consult with Warren,[1] leaving the command to Colonel Hill, whom he believed to be the senior officer present. This led to an altercation between Hill and Thorneycroft, Hill being totally uninformed about Thorneycroft's promotion by heliograph to the local rank of brigadier-general. The upshot was that Thorneycroft ordered the evacuation of the position; whereby it came to pass that his shattered brigade was being marched down the west side of the hill at the very same time that the Boers were abandoning the ground they had gained on the east side thereof, having resigned all hope of driving the British from Spion Kop. In the morning they quietly retook possession of that blood-bouldered height.

At 6 A.M. next morning, the 25th, Buller came across the river and resumed the chief command. Although not one-half of Warren's troops had been engaged, he, Buller, ordered the division to retire across the Tugela, which was accomplished in three days without molestation by the enemy. And thus the second attempt to relieve Ladysmith went wrong.[2]

It is not agreeable to find that Buller threw the blame

[1] "It is regrettable that Sir Charles Warren did not himself go up to Spion Kop, even in the course of the afternoon or evening, especially as he knew that the situation there was very critical, and that the loss of the position implied the failure of the operations." (Lord Roberts's report to the Secretary of State.)

[2] The casualties in the action on Spion Kop were 30 officers and 292 men killed, 53 officers and 1060 men wounded, 4 officers and 303 men missing.

of failure upon his own officers in the fighting line. In a despatch which he managed to get through to General White on 28th January he said:—

"We had awful luck on the 24th. I had got two naval guns and a battery half-way up Spion Kop when the troops evacuated it. If we had had the good fortune to have had among all the colonels up there one really useful soldier, we would have been in Ladysmith in four days."

He continued to have an exaggerated idea of the numerical strength of the enemy.

"Some old Boers told our doctors on Spion Kop that 16,000 men were in front of me, and that 4000 only had been left at Ladysmith. I cannot be sure that this is accurate, but runners also say that the bulk of the Boers are here."

Probably at no time had Botha more than 6000 men at his disposal on the heights on the upper Tugela, while Lucas Meyer had about 2000 opposite Colenso.

However irresolute Buller may have shown himself in actual engagement with the enemy, he was admirably tenacious in his purpose of getting to Ladysmith sooner or later. He began his third attempt on 5th February, by which time the army on the Tugela had been brought up to its original strength—about 27,000—by reinforcement of artillery, cavalry and drafts of infantry. Having failed to force the Boer position to the west of Spion Kop, Buller now determined to attack it to the east of that hill, and fixed on a detached hill called Vaalkrantz as the means of securing access to the plateau beyond Brakfontein. An adjoining elevation called Green Hill partly commanded Vaalkrantz, and would have to be occupied also.

Third attempt to relieve Ladysmith, 5th Feb. 1900.

On the morning of the 5th, Wynne's (formerly Woodgate's) Brigade was sent forward with six field batteries, a howitzer battery, and two naval guns, to make a feint attack upon Brakfontein, which they did with much sound and fury. Simultaneously a pontoon bridge was thrown across the river at a point a few miles to the east, and three brigades were taken across by midday. After Vaalkrantz had been searched by a terrific fire from about seventy

guns, it was carried by the Durham Light Infantry at the point of the bayonet, and occupied by Lyttelton's Brigade before two o'clock. To make the position secure it was essential to get possession of Green Hill also; but it is said that when Buller was asked about the preparations for doing so he replied, "We have done enough for the day."

The result was that time was given for the enemy to concentrate in defence of this new line of attack, and that Lyttelton's Brigade was exposed throughout the following day to the Boer cannonade, from which, however, it did not suffer so severely as the troops on Spion Kop had done, because there was more elbow-room on Vaalkrantz. Lyttelton lost only 225 men in the two days, and was relieved in the evening of the 6th by Hildyard's Brigade. But the movement was at a complete standstill. It is doubtful whether, even if the advance had been pressed, it would have been possible to take the army through the defiles that lie behind Vaalkrantz, unless Brakfontein had been previously stormed, and to do this, Buller telegraphed to Roberts, would cost 2000 or 3000 men. Roberts replied: "Ladysmith must be relieved, even if at the cost of the losses you expect." But Buller, being wholly without trustworthy maps, found that he had been misinformed about the nature of the ground behind Vaalkrantz. He decided to fall back in order to make a fresh attempt by another route; on the 8th the retreat was begun, and by the 12th the whole army was back in its old quarters at Chieveley.

Redvers Buller was now utterly despondent, and gave Lord Roberts to understand that he regarded the relief of Ladysmith as hopeless, "unless I am given more troops. . . . Wherever I turn I come on an enemy in force superior to my own." It is hard to understand how an experienced general could so persistently over-estimate the numbers against which he had to contend, or how, never having had half his troops engaged, he could expect to succeed with 37,000 where he had thrice failed with 27,000.[1] Greater numbers must have aggravated what was already his principal difficulty—transport and supplies.

[1] On 31st January 1900 the army in Natal consisted of 34,830 effectives and 120 guns, besides 1100 Royal Engineers and 1472 Army Service Corps.

With all his faults, Redvers Buller never lost the confidence of his troops. However greatly his officers might chafe at his lethargy, the men believed in him to the last, and he certainly never neglected what must always be the first care of a commander—to keep his men and cattle well fed. He now determined to do what ought to have been done when he first arrived on the Tugela nearly two months before—namely, to take possession of Hlangwane Hill. On 12th February Lord Dundonald's cavalry made a reconnaissance, driving a Boer detachment off Hussar Hill, about two miles south of Hlangwane, whence Buller was able to make careful observation. Botha and Meyer immediately set about reinforcing their left; which made promptitude imperative in pressing the attack on Hlangwane. But among the many soldierly qualities of the British general, he had lost the faculty of promptitude; it was too hot, he thought, for field operations,[1] wherefore the 15th and 16th were spent without any further move. The offensive was resumed on the 17th, and Lyttelton's Division[2] was making good progress with an enveloping attack on the enemy's left, when out flew an order from Redvers Buller to suspend operations because it was so hot! One may wonder who might now be masters of our Indian Empire had the thermometer been as anxiously consulted, say at Assaye, Míaní, or Sobraon.

However, Lyttelton had succeeded in outflanking the Boer left by getting possession of Cingolo Hill, enabling Hildyard's Brigade next morning to clear the height of Monte Cristo, which enfiladed the Boer trenches on Hlangwane and allowed Hildyard's Brigade to seize that much-coveted eminence on the following morning, the 18th, with trifling loss. The south bank of the Tugela was now clear of Boers; but two more precious days were spent—it would not become a civilian to pronounce them wasted—in deliberating whether to advance by again turning the enemy's left flank, or by a direct frontal attack on Pieter's

Final advance on Ladysmith, 12th–27th Feb. 1900.

[1] The heat certainly was extraordinary, but not so great as to prevent Lord Roberts marching thirty-two miles on that day.

[2] General Lyttelton had succeeded to the command of the Second Division *vice* Sir F. Clery invalided.

Hill. Some hesitation was perhaps inevitable, for, in the absence of maps and without reconnoitring, the character of the country along the eastern alternative route was a matter for speculation; none the less were those two days turned to excellent account by Botha and Meyer in strengthening their defences, although the departure of their Free State troops to oppose Lord Roberts's advance in the west reduced their available force to between 4000 and 5000 men.

In the end Buller determined upon the frontal attack. He caused a pontoon bridge to be thrown across the flooded Tugela a little more than a mile below Colenso, and caused the Fifth Division to cross on the afternoon of the 21st. It was the first of seven days' hard fighting, to follow which in detail is the function of a military historian. Verbal description without maps and plans would convey but a confused impression; it must suffice here to record the equal gallantry of Boer and Briton. Day after day the strife was renewed—an unequal strife in point of numbers, but the advantage in that respect was greatly neutralised through the defenders acting with splendid obstinacy in an intricate and difficult country with every yard of which they were perfectly familiar, while the assailants were wholly ignorant thereof. Not until late on the evening of the 27th was Buller master of the position on Pieter's Hill. It was the anniversary of Majuba, and in the morning, just as Barton's Fusilier Brigade was starting to renew the attack, a telegram came in from Lord Roberts announcing the surrender of General Cronje with 4000 men at Paardeberg. The sky was beginning to clear at last. That night the British troops bivouacked on the position that had held them at defiance for nearly three months. The Boers retreated during the night, and on the evening of the 28th Lord Dundonald's brigade rode into Ladysmith. The town had been closely besieged for 118 days, the garrison had suffered severely from disease and latterly from hunger, having eaten nearly all their horses.[1]

Relief of Ladysmith, 28th Feb. 1900.

[1] During the siege General White lost 247 men killed in action and 636 wounded. Twelve officers and 529 men died of disease between 2nd November 1899 and 28th February 1900.

Let Redvers Buller have full share with the officers and men of his army corps, whose fine spirit repeated reverses had no power to daunt, in the honour of having accomplished a very difficult task. Upon certain points in the general's tactics I have spoken frankly of defects as they present themselves to one comfortably reviewing them from his fireside; but let no reader imagine that it has been agreeable to do so, or that the difficulties have been lost sight of. There never was a general more careful of the lives and health of his men; had he been less scrupulous in this respect from the outset, perhaps the work might have been put through quicker and with less aggregate loss. As it was, in the four consecutive attempts to relieve Ladysmith he lost 18 per cent. of his total force, distributed thus—62 officers killed and 213 wounded; 706 men killed and 3815 wounded; 24 officers and 507 men missing.

The operations on the Tugela have been described, not in detail indeed, but at greater length than it will be possible to give to other and not less important passages in this campaign, in order to convey, if possible, some intelligence of the kind of difficulties which the British field force had to encounter and of the peculiar nature of the fighting, so different as it was from anything to which troops could be trained in time of peace in such a densely populated and closely fenced country as Great Britain. A very brief survey of the operations of Lord Roberts and the other generals is all that can be undertaken in the space at the writer's disposal.

On 9th February Lord Roberts was on the Modder River with 35,000 men and about 100 guns, his immediate purpose being the relief of Kimberley. He was opposed by General Cronje, under whom served Christian de Wet, whom the British learned to respect as one of the ablest officers in the Boer army. Leaving Lord Methuen's First Division encamped on the Modder River to engage the attention of the enemy in the strong defensive position of Magersfontein, Roberts, with the main body, undertook a wide turning movement to his right, by the Waterval Drift on the Riet River, sixteen miles south-east of Modder River camp. Lieut.-General French's cavalry division was

sent forward round the Boer left, and effected the relief of Kimberley on 15th February. Jacobsdal had been taken the day before, and on the 16th Cronje, thus outflanked, was in full retreat. He was overtaken and enveloped at Paardeberg on the 18th, French having made a forced march from Kimberley on the 17th to intercept him.[1] The infantry divisions having come up at daybreak on the 18th, he decided on an immediate attack, notwithstanding the extreme fatigue of his men. Cronje's position was hopeless, provided he could be dealt with before reinforcements, known to be on the march from Bloemfontein and the Orange State, could reach him. But Cronje, being in a strong position, intended to die game. The action began at 6 A.M. on the 18th, and the result was still undecided at nightfall, the British having lost 8 officers and 228 men killed, 41 officers and 730 men wounded. Kitchener having sent an urgent request to headquarters for reinforcements, Lord Roberts arrived at the front next morning and ordered a bombardment of the Boer laager. About 5 P.M. the enemy's principal magazine blew up, but still the gallant Boers fought on. Christian de Wet's commando, about 2000 strong, hovered outside the British line on the west, making occasional diversions. Fighting was renewed at intervals until the morning of the 27th—Majuba day—when, after holding a council of war, the brave Cronje surrendered unconditionally, and his 4048 men laid down their arms. "You have made a gallant defence, sir," was Lord Roberts's greeting to the beaten general.

Relief of Kimberley, 15th Feb. 1900.

Battle of Paardeberg, 18th–27th Feb. 1900.

Surrender of Cronje's army, 27th Feb. 1900.

The Commander-in-Chief spent no more time than was necessary in resting his horses and arranging his lines of

[1] This was a splendid performance. French was assured by his brigadiers on the 16th that both men and horses were thoroughly worn out by the exertions of the previous three days, and that further exertions were impossible without a thorough rest. French being one of those spirits which will not brook being told anything is impossible, issued his orders all the same. He lost many men and horses by sunstroke, but he held Cronje to his doom. French left 326 horses at Klip Drift, 597 at Kimberley; 558 died before reaching Paardeberg, and 139 were sick. Unlike Buller, he was no believer in trying to make an omelette without breaking eggs.

communication.[1] His objective was now Bloemfontein, between sixty and seventy miles to the west of Paardeberg; and, preparatory to the advance, he personally reconnoitred the Boer position which barred the way, extending nine miles from flank to flank along the ridges from Leeuw Kop to Seven Sisters. It was calculated that the enemy had about 14,000 men on this extended front. Actions were fought at Poplar Grove on 6th and 7th March, and at Driefontein on the 10th, the Boers retiring eastward after each. Krüger was present during the latter action, his last appearance during the war. Had French's horses not been utterly worn out, it is not easy to see how he could have escaped, but they were unable to work up even a moderate trot. On the 12th French occupied two heights commanding Bloemfontein railway station, and on the 13th the Union flag was hoisted over the capital of the Orange Free State.

Capture of Bloemfontein, 13th March 1900.

Roberts was now in a position to reinforce General Clements and General Gatacre, who, with the Third Division, had been unable to do more than hold their ground in Cape Colony.

At the beginning of May Roberts was in command of the largest all-British force ever assembled in a single command.[2] Buller held Natal with 35,000 men and 100 guns; Roberts was in the Orange State with 65,000 men and 210 guns; Methuen and Hunter were on the left in the Kimberley district with 20,000 men and 68 guns. Add to these 55,000 troops in garrison and on lines of communication, and 23,000 in hospital, and we have a total of about 200,000 men, or five times the force which such an experienced soldier as Sir William Butler had judged to be required to defend the British colonies from invasion by the Boers. Against this mighty host, after the surrender at Paardeberg, there were probably not more than 29,000 Boers under Louis Botha's command.[3] Wessels

[1] No light matter, considering daily supplies were required for 40,000 men, 12,000 horses, and 10,000 mules.

[2] See vol. i. p. 126, where it is shown that in the campaign of Vittoria Wellington's army amounted to 200,000, but this included his Spanish, Portuguese and Sicilian allies.

[3] Botha had succeeded to the chief command on the death of General Piet Joubert.

held 6000 of these in front of Methuen; Delarey and Christian de Wet were opposed to Roberts with some 15,000; while Christian Botha and Fourie held the Biggarsberg and Drakensberg in Natal.

On 3rd May began a general forward movement of the whole British army, the extreme distance from flank to flank being about 375 miles—say from London to Berwick—the objective being Pretoria, the capital of the Transvaal. Mafeking, where Colonel Baden-Powell had been closely beleaguered since 13th October, was relieved on 17th May by a column of Imperial and Colonial light horse and mounted infantry under Colonels Plumer and Mahon, with four Canadian 12-pounders. The gallant defence maintained by Baden-Powell for seven months had served the excellent purpose of containing Cronje's commando of 8000 men and 10 guns for the first month, and a force of from 2000 to 3000 Boers and 8 guns for the remaining six months, besides preserving a large store of supplies, railway plant, &c.; while Colonel Plumer's small force of cavalry had sufficed to repel the invasion of Rhodesia and hold 200 miles of the Bulawayo railway south of Rhodesia.

Relief of Mafeking, 17th May 1900.

Roberts now carried the war into the Transvaal. His advanced guard crossed the Vaal River on 24th May, the Queen's birthday, and on the same day he proclaimed the annexation of the Orange Free State, henceforth to be known as the Orange River Colony. Hazardous, one might suppose, for there were a number of small commandos moving about in the Orange country, continually attacking the Bloemfontein-Kroonstad railway, which was now the only line of supply for the army. The Irish Yeomanry, 470 strong, under Colonel Spragge, marching from Kroonstad to join Colvile's Highland Brigade at Lindley, found that it had moved on towards Heilbronn a few hours before. Spragge's column was immediately surrounded near Lindley by Piet de Wet, and there seems to have been unaccountable neglect in making their position defensible, for when, on the fourth day, the Boers brought up five guns against it, the whole

Annexation of the Orange State proclaimed, 24th May 1900.

Spragge's Yeomanry surrender at Lindley, 1st June 1900.

force surrendered after losing 80 killed and wounded. This was on 1st June; on the 3rd Piet de Wet's brother Christian captured a heavy train of supply with its escort between Rhenoster and Heilbronn. These and other untoward incidents might have made a less confident commander than Roberts pause in his advance on the capital of the Transvaal. He was nearly 1000 miles from his base, upon which he had to rely entirely for supplies; if the railway behind him should be interrupted his great army must starve. But he never wavered in his purpose, and the very boldness and swiftness of his advance took the enemy aback. Resistance melted away before him; Johannesburg was invested on 30th May and surrendered on the 31st. After resting there on 1st and 2nd June he marched forward on the 3rd, and, reaching Pretoria on the morning of the 5th, he received the unconditional surrender of the capital of the Transvaal. The Boer garrison escaped, leaving their families behind them, and carrying away about one thousand British prisoners. But they had to abandon the rest of their prisoners, of whom 158 officers and 3029 men thus regained their freedom.

Surrender of Pretoria, 5th June 1900.

Readers will not have forgotten Lord Roberts's famous march from Cabul to Candahar in 1880.[1] His total fighting force on that occasion was under 12,000 men, with which he covered 312 miles in 22 days. He had now covered about 320 miles in four weeks (including ten days' halt at Kroonstad) with an army of 85,000 men and 280 guns. In estimating the merit of this performance, some will be of opinion that he was reaping the fruit of Redvers Buller's operations in Natal, whereby Louis Botha and a large proportion of the Boer forces had been contained for three months. No doubt that told to Roberts's advantage at first; but the relief of Ladysmith released the Boers engaged in that quarter, setting them free to threaten the western lines of communication and the rear of Roberts's army.

For two months and a half Buller's army of Natal

[1] See p. 79, *supra*.

had lain inactive, when, on 15th May, the advance was resumed, and the Boers were driven successively out of the Biggarsberg, Dundee, Glencoe, Laing's Nek, and Majuba, so that by the end of the month the colony was once more clear of the enemy.

Buller drives the Boers out of Natal, June 1900.

It might have been expected that the Boers, magnificent fighters as they were, would give up the struggle now that the capitals of the two republics were in the hands of the British. Their armies had been broken up into a number of disconnected commandos, many of the men returning to cultivate their farms; and President Krüger was about to embark for Europe on a Dutch man-of-war provided by the Queen of Holland. But this expectation was very far from being realised. Louis Botha still held together a considerable force in the Middelburg district, while in rear of the British army hovered the two Boer generals who earned the highest reputation of any during the war—Delarey and Christian de Wet—who inflicted numerous reverses on weak British garrisons and detachments, and constantly threatened the long lines of communication. For instance, late in May, de Wet marched with 2000 men and 6 guns from Roodeburg to the railway north of Pretoria, 375 miles in nineteen days, twice fighting his way through superior forces, surprised the Derbyshire Regiment at Roodeval station on 7th June, where they were in charge of stores, and captured the whole battalion after a severe fight, cutting off all communication with Pretoria. Four days later a detachment was attacked and defeated at Nitral's Nek on 11th June by Delarey, who captured a squadron of the Scots Greys, 90 men of the Lincolnshire Regiment and 2 guns.

Incidents such as this were inevitable in a war which had become sheer *guerrilla*. When reported in England they conveyed an unfair impression of the capacity of our officers and the steadiness of their men. In coping with this kind of enemy Roberts's army was distributed over an area nearly double that of France, Germany and Austria combined.[1]

[1] Reckoned from Cape Town, the base of operations, and including part of Rhodesia, it was equal to 1,208,030 square miles, whereas France, Germany, and Austria aggregate only 677,063. It was only Southern Rhodesia, however, with which Roberts had to deal.

It should be borne in mind also that the Boers wore no distinctive uniform, which is contrary to the rules of civilised warfare; whence, as Lord Roberts observed in one of his despatches, "they have found it easy to pose as peaceful agriculturists one day, and to take part in active hostilities the next." When the German army invaded France, *franc-tireurs*—that is, men bearing arms but not wearing a recognised uniform—were shot when taken.

Surrender of Prinsloo's commando, 21st July 1900.

On 21st July Generals Hunter and Rundle rounded up the combined commandos of Prinsloo and Christian de Wet near Fouriesburg. Four thousand men under Prinsloo surrendered; but the fiery de Wet cut his way through the cordon and escaped with 2000 men, and continued to give trouble throughout the rest of the year.

On 25th August Redvers Buller and Lord Roberts at length joined forces at Belfast, where they fought a severe and successful action against Botha's main army, lasting three days and a half, and on 1st September Roberts issued a proclamation annexing the Transvaal to the dominions of the Crown.

Annexation of the Transvaal, 1st Sept. 1909.

It is hardly necessary to follow the movements of the army any further; indeed, it would be impossible to do so within any moderate limits owing to the detached character of the operations. President Krüger had abandoned the seat of war, sailing for Europe on 11th September, leaving the British opposed by no regular Government and no organised military force.[1] On 23rd September General Pienar, with a force of 3000 Boers, surrendered to the Portuguese authorities. Redvers Buller was relieved of his command on 6th October, and returned to England. Lord Roberts also, believing hostilities to be practically at an end, followed him on 1st December, leaving Sir Alfred Milner as Administrator of the Transvaal and the Orange River Colonies, and Lord Kitchener as Commander-in-Chief of the forces.

Feeling ran very high among the Afrikanders of Cape Colony because of the suppression of the two Boer repub-

[1] It was a great disappointment to the Boers and their many well-wishers on the Continent that the German Emperor declined to receive Krüger.

lics and the disappearance of the Vierkleur—the Dutch African Republican flag; and after Roberts's departure the Colony was invaded by various independent commandos, many of the Afrikander colonists rising to join them. Fortunately General Knox was able to head de Wet back at the Orange River, else the situation might have become serious. The century drew to a close, leaving South Africa in a condition of irregular war, which, in the absence of any responsible Government with which to arrange terms of peace, was to continue for yet another eighteen months. But as the annexation of the two Republics had converted the indomitable de Wet and Delarey technically into rebels, the operations necessary for their suppression fall to be narrated by a historian of the twentieth century, as also the federation by Act of Parliament, on 31st May 1910, of the Cape Colony, Natal, the Transvaal, and the Orange River Colony in the Union of South Africa, the first Prime Minister of the Federal Legislature being the Right Hon. Louis Botha, formerly Commander-in-Chief of the Boer forces.

Conclusion of the war, 16th May 1902.

It was late in the South African autumn—May 1902—before the heroic Boer leaders could be brought to recognise the futility of further resistance, and to meet Lord Milner and Lord Kitchener in conference at Pretoria to arrange the terms of submission. These terms included the incorporation of both the fallen Republics in the British Empire, and British money was to be liberally granted to repair the ravages of war and to resettle the Boers in their farms. The spirit in which these men—indomitable as patriots, well-nigh indomitable as soldiers—accepted the inevitable is well shown in the history of *The Three Years' War*, written by Christian de Wet and dedicated to "My fellow-subjects of the British Empire."

"I have often been present at the death-bed and at the burial of those nearest to my heart—father, mother, brother, and friend—but the grief which I felt on those occasions was not to be compared with what I now underwent at the burial of my nation. There was nothing left for us now but to hope that the Power which conquered us, the Power to which we were compelled to submit, though it cut us to the heart to do so, and which by the surrender of our arms we had accepted as our ruler, would draw

us nearer and ever nearer by the strong cords of love. To my nation I address one last word. Be loyal to the new Government! Loyalty pays best in the end. Loyalty alone is worthy of a nation which has shed its blood for freedom."

To these noble words, wrung from the brave heart of one whose name must ever shine brightly in the roll of Christian chivalry, the historian can but add a heartfelt Amen.

The lessons of this war have been too grave, too startling, to be dealt with in a paragraph, nor will they have proved too costly if they leave a permanent impression upon our military administration.[1] During the seven years following the outbreak of hostilities in South Africa, the whole of the British land forces have been twice reorganised; and still the solemn question remains unsolved, what would have been the position of the British Empire if in the war which began in 1899 our enemy had been a powerful European State, instead of two small inland Republics? Instead of withdrawing 7000 troops from India, the Queen's Government would have had to send 20,000 men there to bring the Indian garrison up to war strength; leaving 350,000 Militia and Volunteers to guard our shores, without organisation,[2] equipment, stores, or transport. Our rulers assure us that these defects have been remedied, but Lord Roberts, whose experience of sixty years of active service entitles him to an attentive hearing, declares that the land forces of Great Britain are still wholly inadequate for the security of the country, and that they will remain so until every able-bodied man is submitted to so much military training as will fit him to take his place in the line of defence.

One bright ray is reflected from the dark war cloud that shadowed the close of the nineteenth century, namely, the glow of enthusiasm that sent thousands of British colonists from both hemispheres flocking to enlist under the Union flag. That proved, at least, that Imperial unity was no senti-

[1] The additional debt incurred in consequence of the Boer War was £162,000,000, which may be compared with £33,000,000 incurred for the Crimean campaign, £600,000,000 for twenty-three years of war with France, and £121,000,000 for the war with the American colonies.

[2] Such organisation as there was would have withdrawn one-third of the Militia upon mobilisation to reinforce the line battalions.

mental dream, but a flesh and blood reality, which no living Englishman has done so much to consolidate and render enduring as the quondam Radical—Joseph Chamberlain. Nor was the feeling in the mother country less charged with enthusiasm for the success of British arms. There was, of course, much of the same kind of carping by members of the Opposition in the House of Commons as that to which Fox and a small band of Radicals lent themselves when Great Britain was engaged in the Napoleonic wars. Taunts and reproaches were uttered, accusations made, both within and without the walls of Parliament, against the capacity of British officers and the behaviour of their men; but such words, spoken in the heat of party strife, may well be left unrecorded, for, as was about to be shown, they found no echo in the hearts of the people.

Advices received from the seat of war in the early autumn justified Ministers in believing that hostilities would be at an end before Parliament, which was prorogued on 8th August, should meet again in the usual course. Consequently they deemed it expedient to take the sense of the nation on their administration during the last five years. In the *London Gazette* for 18th September appeared the announcement that Parliament was to be dissolved on the 25th. It does not often happen that Ministers give offence to their opponents by dissolving too soon; the complaint is much more frequent that they cling to office too long. But on this occasion great indignation was expressed by members of the Opposition because the dissolution had not been postponed until the following year, which happened to be the first of a new century, when the new register of voters would have been made up. The Government were accused of aiming at an unfair advantage, to use Mr. Asquith's words, "by hustling on the election in order that the patriotic fervour which had animated the whole nation might be exploited, if possible, in the interests of a particular party."

Dissolution of Parliament, 25th Sept. 1900.

Now the Unionist Government having entered upon the sixth year of its existence, the Septennial Act required that a dissolution should take place within little more than twelve months; consequently, unless it be held that it is

the duty of a Cabinet to choose for such dissolution the exact season most convenient for their opponents, the charge of unfair dealing must be held to have been groundless.

The verdict of the country in what was to be known as the "khaki election"[1] was emphatic. The composition of the new House of Commons showed a gain of several seats to the Unionist party. In Ireland the representation was unchanged; but in Scotland, for the first time since the Reform Act of 1832, the Liberal members formed a minority. Glasgow returned a Unionist for each of her seven seats.

Conservatives . .	334	Liberals . . .	186
Liberal Unionists .	68	Irish Nationalists .	82
	402		268

Unionist majority . 134

Narrow as the limits prescribed for this work have proved to be in proportion to the crowded chronicle from which salient features had to be chosen—too narrow for more than a mere panoramic sketch—room must be found to record yet another stroke of fate, which, although it fell just outside the hundred years under review, yet marked the term of a great career wholly and indissolubly associated with the nineteenth century.

In April 1900, Queen Victoria was within a few weeks of entering her eighty-second year. It had been her custom for some seasons past to exchange the rigours of an English spring for the sunnier clime of southern France; but now she announced the determination to mark her recognition of the gallantry of her Irish regiments in South Africa, and her sympathy for Irish soldiers who had fallen in action or perished by disease, by visiting the Irish capital. Some members of her Court felt grave misgivings about the prudence of risking an unfavourable reception. The omens were not altogether propitious. Mr. John Redmond, by a letter in the newspapers, warned the Sovereign that she

Queen Victoria visits Ireland, 3rd April 1900.

[1] Scarlet, the historic fighting dress of British infantry, had to be abandoned as too conspicuous when opposed to skilled riflemen, and cloth known as khaki, of a dull olive hue, was adopted for service clothing.

must not expect an address from the Corporation of Dublin, which, he declared, must be "either an insult or a lie." But the Queen overruled all objections, and when she landed in Dublin on 3rd April the Lord Mayor was able to present her with a loyal address of welcome, which had been adopted by thirty votes to twenty-two.

"I am deeply gratified," said her Majesty in reply, "that I have been able at this time to see again the motherland of those brave sons who have borne themselves in defence of my crown and empire with a cheerful valour as conspicuous now as ever in their glorious past."

The Queen remained three weeks in Ireland without receiving any of the unkindly manifestations which had been feared, so that people began to question the wisdom of those counsellors who had dissuaded her Majesty from going among her Irish subjects during a period of forty years.

On 12th November the Queen held a council at Windsor to give audience to her retiring Ministers and to receive her new, and last, Cabinet. On the first day of the new century, 1st January 1901, she sent a message of good wishes and congratulation to the Earl of Hopetoun, first Governor-General of the Australian Commonwealth inaugurated on that day; and within that week she received to audience Lord Roberts, who had landed from South Africa on 2nd January, in order to have his assurance as to the prospects of peace. These were her Majesty's last acts of state. It was in keeping with her lifelong character and practice that her last act as the head of British society should be the dictation of a letter of womanly sympathy with the widow of Dr. Creighton, Bishop of London, who died on 14th January. After that it became known throughout the land that this noble spirit was preparing to take its flight. The intense anxiety shown by people of every class for news from the sick-room at Osborne, cannot fail to have impressed those who remember that week of suspense;—the cabmen on the rank, the old lady who sweeps a crossing in St. James's Square, the Highland crofter on the lone hillside, miners at the pit-mouth, herring-fishers returning from their night's toil—no one's vocation

The Queen's last acts of state, Jan. 1901.

so lowly or his dwelling so remote as to remove him outside the warm tide of reverent sympathy that flowed between the palace and the humblest homestead. The German Emperor hurried away from public rejoicing in celebration of the bi-centenary of the Prussian monarchy, and arrived in time to receive his grandmother's recognition on her death-bed. Queen Victoria died on Tuesday, 22nd January 1901, in the sixty-fourth year of her reign, wanting four months to complete her eighty-second year.

Death of Queen Victoria, 22nd Jan. 1901.

The vocabulary of eulogy has been exhausted, its terms vulgarised, by their indiscriminate use in connection with royal personages.[1] When Henry VIII. first adopted the style "his Majesty," instead of the older English designation of the Sovereign as "his Grace," was it because subjects had looked so often in vain for kingly grace; whereas majesty might be secured, or at least symbolised, by means of robes, jewels, upholstery, and exceeding pomp? Majesty may be acquired, but grace can never be other than innate. Was there ever a British monarch who might meetly have reverted to the older style of "the Queen's Grace," that monarch was Victoria. Examine well her title to such distinction above her predecessors on the throne. Sixty-three years and a half had passed since the Queen addressed her first speech to the Privy Council.

"I ascend the throne with a deep sense of the responsibility imposed upon me; but I am supported by the consciousness of my own right intentions and by my dependence on the protection of Almighty God.

"It will be my care to strengthen our institutions, civil and ecclesiastical, by discreet improvement wherever improvement is required, and to do all in my power to allay animosity and discord.

"Acting upon these principles, I shall upon all occasions look with confidence to the wisdom of Parliament and the affection of my people, which form the true support of the dignity of the Crown and ensure the stability of the constitution."

[1] Echard declares that when James II. ascended the throne there was universal rejoicing, and, amidst the loud acclamation of the multitude, "all people began to wipe their eyes and to dry up those tears they had so plentifully shed [for King Charles II.]." Burnet, on the other hand, records that "there were no tears for the last king and no shouts for the present one." Which statement is more likely to be true?

Promises! how many and bitter are the sayings about them, especially when spoken by princes; but here is one that should be graven in granite upon any memorial to Queen Victoria. It may well be supposed that these words were listened to at the time as being no more than convention and courtly decorum demanded of the new Sovereign. Nobody suspected a maiden of eighteen of more than a pious aspiration, still less of the ability necessary for their fulfilment. But Englishmen well know—high Heaven knows—how fully and how nobly the pledge was discharged.

Queen Victoria's reign is one long record of material and social progress. Never before has it been the historian's lot to chronicle such rapid, yet steady, development of any nation, to trace such a series of peaceful changes, to record such accumulation of wealth, such diffusion of comfort within a like period. The full part borne by Queen Victoria in the advancement of every good cause may never be revealed till the history of our times has been written from afar and the secrets of successive Cabinets unlocked; but it is well known that there never was a worthy scheme set afoot for the promotion of fruitful industry and commerce, for the redress of wrongs or unjust disabilities, for the relief of suffering or the control of disease, that did not meet with active, earnest encouragement at the hands of the Queen. Perhaps what endeared her most of all to the great middle-class of her people, among whom the wave of Puritan reaction has not yet died away, was the example she set of domestic virtue in a sphere whence it had long since been scared. From the day of her accession, Queen Victoria established and maintained in her court such a high moral and chivalrous ideal as has its equal only in the mythical annals of King Arthur's Round Table.

This memorable reign was ushered by a transfer of political power of such magnitude as was viewed with grave apprehension by many thoughtful persons, who beheld therein presage of disaster to cherished institutions. He would be daring indeed who should pronounce all such apprehension to be groundless, or declare that the agencies

liberated in 1832 have spent their force. No watchful mind may dismiss lightly the question, ever recurring—*Quo tendimus?* But this, at least, is beyond region of dispute, that at the close of the nineteenth century the British monarchy rested on a broader and sounder foundation than military prowess or legislative enactment could provide. It rested, for the first time in history, on the affection of the people, who, through the present democratic constition and subject to the Almighty, control the destiny of the Empire.

How has this been brought about? How was it that the Sovereign won the personal affection of her subjects? *Dux fœmina facti.* Not by design was it achieved, nor by laborious compliance with irksome ceremony, nor by avidity for popular applause. It was the outcome of a true woman's nature, acting through a vigorous intellect and a resolute will. It were idle to speculate what convulsions might have accompanied the vast development of popular power had the monarch been one such as the nation had known in the past, heedless to attract affection and helpless to command respect. Different opinions are held as to the degree in which men and nations are masters of their own fortunes, and in what measure these are regulated and controlled by the unseen Disposer of Events; but all patriot Britons will unite in thankfulness for the fact that, throughout a long and critical period of change, the Head of the State was Victoria the Well-beloved.

THE END

INDEX

Abdur Rahman, iii. 77, 121
Abercromby, Sir Ralph, Commander of Forces in Ireland, i. 28; in Egypt, 29; death, 29
Abercromby, Mr. Speaker, ii. 37, 46
Aberdeen, Earl of, Foreign Secretary, i. 308, 320
—— Secretary for War and Colonies, ii. 77; Coalition Ministry, 217, 242; and Nicholas I., 221, 227; Turco-Russian War, 224; Crimean War, 227; resignation, 242; magnanimity, 253
Abyssinian War, ii. 345
Academical Institutions Bill, ii. 150
Ackermann, treaty of, i. 320
Acre, bombardment of, iii. 100
Adams, Mr., ii. 311, 314
Addington, Henry (afterwards Viscount Sidmouth), First Lord of Treasury and Chancellor of Exchequer, i. 13; character and policy, 17, 32; relations with Pitt, 13, 33, 35; opposed by Fox and Grenville, 41; resignation, 43; becomes Viscount Sidmouth and Lord President of the Council, 49; resignation, 51; in Grenville's Cabinet, 64; Lord President of the Council, 173; Home Secretary, 207; the "Six Acts," 222, 264; retires from office, 261; intrigues against Canning, 265
Adelaide, Princess of Hohenlohe, ii. 200
Adelaide, Queen, ii. 39
Adrianople, treaty of, i. 321
Adullamites, ii. 329, 336
Afghan War, ii. 124; iii. 71
Agnew, Mr. Vans, ii. 204
Agriculture. *See* Great Britain
Aird, Sir John, iii. 272
Alabama, affair of the, ii. 310; iii. 33, 49, 234
Albuera, battle of, i. 153
Alexander I., Tzar of Russia, policy, i. 27; meets Napoleon at Tilsit, 84; at Erfurth, 109; the Holy Alliance, 269; affairs of Spain, 274; of Turkey and Greece, 285; death, 288
Alexander II., Tzar, ii. 246
Alexandra, Princess of Wales, ii. 318
Alexandria, battle of, i. 29; bombardment, iii. 104
Aliwal, battle of, ii. 136
"All the Talents" Ministry, i. 63; fall, 81; and the slave trade, 185; Royal Commission on education in Ireland, ii. 97; iii. 147
Allerton, Lord, iii. 207
Alma, battle of the, ii. 232
Althorp, Viscount (afterwards 3rd Earl Spencer), i. 64, 302; leader of Opposition, 326
—— leader of House of Commons, ii. 4; budget of 1832, 24; Irish Church, 29; resignation, 32; recalled, 33; Poor Law reform, 35; goes to House of Lords, 37
Alvanley, Lord, ii. 50; duel with O'Connell, 51
Alverstone, Lord, iii. 190
American War, i. 181, 183
American Civil War, ii. 305
Amherst, Lord, ii. 78
Amiens, treaty of, i. 17, 30
Amirs, the, ii. 132, 134
Ampthill (Mr. Odo Russell), Lord, iii. 34
Anglesey, Marquess of, Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland, i. 310; recalled, 312
Anglo-Russian agreement, i. 289
Anson, Gen., ii. 273
Anstruther, Col., iii. 92
Anti-Corn-Law League, ii. 117, 120
Anti-Slavery agitation, 7
Apprenticeship system, ii. 14
Arábi, revolt of, iii. 124
Architecture, nineteenth century, iii. 285
Argyll, Duke of, iii. 137, 139
Armed Neutrality, the, i. 21; revived, with inclusion of Prussia, 22
Arms Act in Ireland, ii. 142
Army Purchase abolished, iii. 36
Arnold, Dr., and Tractarian Movement, ii. 105
Ashanti War, iii. 44

Ashbourne, Lord, iii. 158; Land Purchase Act, 163
Ashley. *See* Shaftesbury
Asquith, Mr., iii. 211, 316
Assaye, battle of, i. 75
Assouan Dam, iii. 271
Atbara, battle of the, iii. 268
Auckland, Lord, ii. 29, 124
Auerstädt, battle of, i. 70
Augustenburg, Duke of, ii. 319
Austerlitz, battle of, i. 59
Australia, iii. 235
Ayub Khán, iii. 77

Badajoz, siege of, i. 155
Baden-Powell, Gen., iii. 333; Professor, 6
Baker Pasha, iii. 111
Baker, Gen. Valentine, iii. 108
Baker, Sir Benjamin, iii. 272
Balaklava, battle of, ii. 237
Balfour, Mr. Arthur, iii. 131, 149, 158, 166, 182, 206, 227
Ballot, introduction of, iii. 42
Baltic expedition, i. 23
Bank Charter Act suspended, ii. 164, 283, 332
Bank of England suspends cash payment, i. 214
Bankruptcy Act, iii. 146
Barham, Lord, iii. 26
Baring. *See* Cromer
Barnard, Sir Henry, ii. 274
Barnett (Barnato), Isaac, iii. 249
Barton, Gen., iii. 312
Bathurst, Lord, ii. 9
Beach, Sir Michael Hicks-. *See* Hicks-Beach
Beaconsfield. *See* Disraeli
Bedchamber Question, the, ii. 91
Bell, Graham, invents telephone, iii. 282
Bellingham murders Perceval, i. 173
Belmont, battle of, iii. 312
Bentinck, Lord George, ii. 156
Berlin, Congress of, iii. 59
Besant, Mrs., iii. 128
Bethell, Sir Richard, ii. 283
Bicycling, iii. 279
Bill of Indemnity for Protestant Dissenters, i. 13
Bill of Pains and Penalties, i. 248–51
Birmingham Political Union, i. 331
Bismarck, Prince von, ii. 319, 330; iii. 29, 34, 102, 252, 253
Blanketeers, march of the, i. 206
Blignières, M. de, iii. 101
Bloemfontein, Conference of, iii. 295; capture of, 332
Blücher, Marshal, i. 190
Boer War, iii. 292–331
Botha, Gen., iii. 305, 310, 323, 332, 334
Bowlby, Mr., ii. 260
Bowring, Sir John, ii. 256
Boycott, Capt., and "boycotting," iii. 136
Brabazon, Capt., ii. 260
Bradlaugh, Mr., iii. 127, 208
Bradshaw, Mr., ii. 115
Brand, Mr. Speaker, iii. 138
Brand, President, iii. 93, 249, 250, 293
Brazil, and Portugal, i. 93; independence declared, 283
"Bread-fruit Bligh," iii. 236
Bremer, Sir J. Gordon, ii. 123
Bright, Mr. John, ii. 20, 87, 258, 290, 328, 342; iii. 13, 24, 26, 52, 95, 105, 174
Brind, Brigadier Frederick, ii. 269
British Association founded, ii. 102
British East Africa Company, iii. 257
British and Foreign School Society, ii. 98
British India Steam Navigation Company, iii. 257
British South Africa Company, iii. 255
Brodrick (afterwards Lord Midleton), Hon. St. John, iii. 220
Bromhead, Lieut., iii. 87
Brougham, Henry (afterwards Lord Brougham and Vaux), defends Queen Caroline, i. 232; Lord Chancellor, 336
—— and Coercion Bill, ii. 31, 33; campaign in Scotland, 37; and Melbourne, 37, 47; dismissed from office, 39; in retirement, 60; attacks the Government, 74, 81, 83, 117; and educational societies, 98
Browne, Maj.-Gen. Sir Samuel, iii. 74
Bruce, Sir Frederick, ii. 259
Brydon, Dr. William, at Cabul, ii. 129; at Lucknow, 279
Buccleuch, 5th Duke of, ii. 120, 153, 154; iii. 67
Buccleuch, 6th Duke of, iii. 67
Buchanan, President, ii. 340
Buckingham, Duke of, ii. 37, 122
Buckingham Palace, ii. 45
Budget of 1832 (Althorp), ii. 24; of 1842 (Peel), 120; of 1860 (Gladstone), 300; iii. 247; Lord Randolph Churchill's proposed, 177; of 1894 (Sir William Harcourt), 216
Buenos Ayres, disaster of, i. 88
Bulgarian Massacres, iii. 51

Buller, Gen. Sir Redvers, iii. 299, *et seq.*
Bulwer, Mr. (afterwards Baron Dalling and Bulwer), ii. 174
Bulwer, Sir Henry, iii. 84
Buonaparte. *See* Napoleon
Burgers, President, iii. 83
Burgos, siege, i. 158; retreat, 159
Burgoyne, Sir John, ii. 228, 231
Burke, Mr., iii. 141
Burmah, ii. 208; annexation of, 211
Burmese War, first, ii. 208; second, 210
Burnes, Capt. (afterwards Sir Alexander), ii. 124; murder, 126
Burrard, Gen. Sir Harry, i. 104
Burrows, Brig.-Gen., iii. 77
Bury, Lady Charlotte, i. 238
Busaco, battle of, i. 151
Butler, Gen. Sir Wm., iii. 299
Butt, Mr. Isaac, iii. 132
Byron, Lord, i. 286

Cabul, retreat, ii. 128; reconquest, 131
Calabrian expeditions, i. 69, 137
Calder, Sir Robert, i. 53
Cameron, Capt., ii. 346
Campbell-Bannerman, Mr., iii. 220
Campbell, Sir Archibald, ii. 208
Campbell, Sir Colin (afterwards Lord Clyde), ii. 276, 279
Campbell, Sir George, ii. 168
Campbell, Sir John (afterwards Baron Campbell), ii. 27, 60, 168
Canada, Upper and Lower, ii. 74; legislative union, 85; Dominion constituted, 87; federation with N. American colonies, 341
Canning, Charles, Earl of, Governor-General of India, ii. 216, 262, 269, 289; "Clemency Canning," 270
Canning, George, and Irish Union, i. 6; resigns with Pitt, 13; in Opposition, 35; Treasurer of Navy, 45; as an orator, 62; Foreign Secretary, 82; policy, 86–89, 90, 102–10; quarrel with Castlereagh, 108; intrigues and duel, 138–42; declines to join Perceval Cabinet, 141; Liverpool Cabinet, 176; resigns office, 251, 255–6; Governor-General of India, 265; Foreign Secretary, 266; foreign policy, 266–93; jealousy of Duke of Wellington, 251; quarrel with the Duke, 294–7; First Lord of the Treasury and Chancellor of the Exchequer, 297; illness and death, 298–300
—— and the slave trade, ii. 9
Canning, Sir Stratford. *See* Stratford de Redcliffe
Canterbury. *See* Manners-Sutton
Cantillon, attempts to assassinate Duke of Wellington, i. 212
Canton, bombardment of, ii. 259
Cape Colony, cession to Dutch and reconquest, i. 34; affairs of, iii. 244, 247
Carbonari, the, i. 268
Cardigan, Lord, and the Light Brigade, ii. 238
Cardwell, Viscount, ii. 342; iii. 36
"Caretakers" Ministry, iii. 158, 163, 171
Carey, James, iii. 144
Carleton, Col., iii. 304
Carlisle, Earl of, ii. 29
Carlos, Don, ii. 173
Caroline of Brunswick, Queen, i. 228; as Princess of Wales, 229–41; the "Delicate Inquiry," 230; Second Inquiry, 233; Milan Commission, 239–40; becomes Queen Consort, but name omitted from Prayer Book, 241; Bill of Pains and Penalties, 248; trial, 248; death and funeral, 251–2
Caron, Major le (Beach), iii. 132, 190
Carnarvon, Lord, ii. 335, 342; iii. 42, 62, 83, 161, 168
Cartwright, Dr. Edmund, inventor of power-loom, i. 201
Cartwright, Major ("Father of Reform"), i. 217
Castlereagh, Viscount (afterwards 2nd Marquess of Londonderry), and Roman Catholic claims, i. 10–11, 264, 294; resigns office with Pitt, 13; in Pitt's last Cabinet, 44, 62; Secretary for War in Portland Administration, 82; foreign policy, 136; resignation, and duel with Canning, 140; Foreign Secretary, 173; attends Congress of Vienna, 188; leader of House of Commons, the "Six Acts," 221, 263; becomes Lord Londonderry, 262; suicide, 262; foreign and domestic policy, 263–76
Cathcart, Lord, commands expedition to Copenhagen, i. 87
Catholic Association, i. 308, 323
Catholic Emancipation, Bill carried, i. 318; result of, 322. *See also* Roman Catholic
Catholic Relief Bill, Castlereagh's thrown out, i. 294
Cato Street Conspiracy, i. 222

Causeway Heights, ii. 238
Cavagnari, Sir Louis, iii. 64, 75–6
Cavendish, Lord Frederick, iii. 128, 141
Cavour, Count, ii. 296
Cawnpur, ii. 271; massacre, 272
Cetewayo, iii. 84, 87
Chalmers, Dr. Thomas, ii. 109
Chamberlain, Mr., iii. 95, 164, 171, 180, 185, 209, 226, 263, 274, 298, 339
Channel Fleet, first, ii. 228
Channel Tunnel, iii. 281
Charles IV., King of Spain, i. 94
Charles X., Comte d'Artois, i. 328
Charlotte, Princess of Wales, i. 230, 234; engagement to Prince of Orange, 235; marriage to Prince Leopold, and death, 239
Charlotte, Queen, i. 233, 241
Chard, Lieut., iii. 87
Chartists, the, ii. 92, 167–70
Chartered Company, iii. 249, 255, 262
Chatham, Earl of, i. 15, 33, 137
Chelmsford, Gen. Lord, iii. 86
Chérif Pasha, iii. 102, 111
Child labour, ii. 14, 21
Childers, Mr., iii. 33, 154, 254
Chilianwála, battle of, ii. 207
China, war with, ii. 121, 255
Chloroform, discovery of, ii. 180
Christian, King of Denmark, ii. 319
Chupatties, symbolic, ii. 264
Church of England and education, ii. 98; and science, iii. 1 *et seq.*
Church Missionary Society, iii. 2
Churchill, Lord Randolph, iii. 130, 148, 153, 157, 160, 166, 176, 178, 185, 199, 200, 206, 209, 217, 221, 233
Chusan, capture of, ii. 123
Cinque Ports, i. 31, 37, 45
Cintra, Convention of, i. 106
City of Glasgow Bank failure, iii. 64
Ciudad Rodrigo, i. 150–55
Clare, Earl of, and Catholic Emancipation, i. 2; and the Union, 6; death, 18
Clarence (William), Duke of. *See* William IV.
Clarence, H.R.H. Albert Victor, Duke of, death, iii. 210
Clarendon, Lord, ii. 222, 327; iii. 28
Clerke, Mr., i. 121
Clery, Gen. Sir F., iii. 310
Cleveland, President, iii. 233
Clive, Lord (Sabut Jung), ii. 127
Closure instituted, iii. 132
Coalition, 3rd European, i. 56
Coalition Ministry, ii. 217, 242
Cobbett, William, i. 209, 337; ii. 35
Cobden, Richard, ii. 20, 120, 196, 257, 292, 298, 321
Cochrane, Thomas, Lord (afterwards 10th Earl of Dundonald), i. 286
Cockburn, Sir A., Lord Chief-Justice, ii. 314, 333
Codrington, Admiral Sir Edward, i. 290, 320
Codrington, Sir William, ii. 248
Coercion Act (1830), i. 336; (1801–1900), iii. 22; (1881), 138, 143; (1887), 183
Coercion Bill (1846), ii. 159
Coke, Gen., iii. 323
Colborne, Sir John, ii. 83, 85
Coldbath Fields riot, ii. 26
Colenso, Bishop, iii. 8, 311
Coleridge, Lord, iii. 38
Colley, Sir George, iii. 91–4
Collings, Mr. Jesse, iii. 170
Colonial Conferences, first, iii. 196; second, 275
Colonial troops in South African War, iii. 318
Colvile, Gen. Sir H., iii. 307
Colvin, Sir Auckland, iii. 108
Commercial treaty with France, ii. 298
Compensation for Disturbance Bill, iii. 136
Confederate States, ii. 305
Confederation of the Rhine, i. 70; dissolved, 164
Conference of Constantinople, iii. 54
Conference of Erfurth, i. 109
Congress of Troppau and Laybach, i. 268
Congress of Vienna, i. 188; meets at Verona, 272
"Conservative," term first used, ii. 4, 33
Conservative party, ii. 41; policy, 42; position (1835), 43; split over the Corn Laws, 151, 154, 181; oppose Penny Post, 95
Consort, H.R.H. Albert, Prince, betrothed to Queen Victoria, ii. 115; debate on his annuity, 161; marriage, 116; noble career, 182, 227, 309; created Prince Consort, 266; death, 309
Conspiracy to Murder Bill, ii. 285
Convention between Great Britain and Northern Powers, i. 27

Convention of Cintra, i. 106
Convention of London, iii. 293
Convention of Paris, i. 196, 198
Convention of Pretoria, iii. 94
Conyngham, Marchioness, i. 246, 260, 327
Conyngham, Marquess, ii. 28, 68
Cook, Capt., iii. 241
Cooke, Mr. (afterwards Sir) W. F., ii. 339
Copenhagen, battle of, i. 25; expedition, 87
Corbett, Brigadier, ii. 270
Corn Bill, passed, ii. 157
Corn Laws, i. 216, 256, 298; repealed, ii. 152
Cornwallis, Marquess, Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland, and the Union, i. 5–12; and Catholic Emancipation, 6, 12; resigns office with Pitt, 13; Governor-General of India, and death, 77–8
Corrupt boroughs, i. 7, 216, 306
Cottenham (Sir Christopher Pepys), Lord, ii. 60
Cotton famine, ii. 316
Cowper, Lord, iii. 137, 140, 175
Cowper-Temple clause, iii. 26
Craig, Sir James, i. 69
Cranborne. *See* Salisbury
Cranbrook (Mr. Gathorne-Hardy), Lord, ii. 324, 334; iii. 80, 127
Crawford, Gen. Robert, i. 88; Light Brigade, 116, 134, 151; death, 155
Crimes Act, iii. 22, 159
Crimean War, ii. 227–51
Criminal Law Amendment, iii. 183
Croker, John Wilson, i. 99
Cromer, Earl of, iii. 101, 108, 266, 272
Cronje, Gen., iii. 262, 304, 306, 329, 331
Cross, Mr. Richard (afterwards Viscount), ii. 21; iii. 43
Crown *in re* politics, ii. 70, 182; iii. 16, 150
Crystal Palace, ii. 184
Cuesta, Captain-General of Spanish Forces, i. 101; and Wellington, 129; superseded, 135
Cumberland, Ernest, Duke of, ii. 66
Cureton, Gen., ii. 206
Cyprus, affairs of, iii. 360

Dalhousie, James Ramsay, 10th Earl, 1st Marquess, Vice-President of Board of Trade, ii. 203; Governor-General of India, 204, 262; annexations, 210, 263, 282; resignation, 216
Dalrymple, Sir Hew, i. 103 *et seq.*
Danish imbroglio, ii. 319
Darwin, Charles, iii. 3 *et seq.*
Davitt, Michael, iii. 134, 190
Deane, Col., iii. 92
Death duties, iii. 217
Delarey, Gen., iii. 335
Delhi, ii. 275
Denmark, expedition, i. 87
Derby, 13th Earl of, ii. 61
Derby (Edward Stanley), 14th Earl of, the "Rupert of Debate," i. 336
—— Chief Secretary for Ireland, ii. 3, 23, 97; Irish Coercion Bill, 5; Secretary for War and Colonies, 7; and slave trade, 11; Factory and Workshops Act, 21; resigns, 28; and Irish Church, 29; declines office under Peel, 41; a free-lance, 49; leaves Brookes' Club, 56; secedes from Whig party, 61; in Peel's Cabinet, 90; opposes Russell's Education Bill, 99; Tenants' Compensation Bill, 151; resigns office on the Corn Laws question, 153; in opposition, 154, 158; vote of censure on Government, 178; attempts to form Cabinet, 188–9; goes to House of Lords, 195; 1st Administration, 195–6; resigns, 202; fails to form Cabinet, 252; in opposition, 257; 2nd Administration, 287; and Reform, 290; and Jewish disabilities, 291; resigns, 291; and Italian patriots, 293; on the House of Lords, 305; and "Liberal-Conservative" party, 325; 3rd Administration, 312, 331; Derby-Disraeli Reform Bill, 335
—— resignation and death, iii. 10, 16
Derby, 15th Earl of, ii. 312; iii. 47, 51, 54, 59
Derby, 16th Earl of, iii. 60, 252
Dervishes defeated, iii. 268
Devon Commission, iii. 20
Devonshire. *See* Hartington
Dhuleep Singh, ii. 135
Diamond Jubilee, iii. 273
Dillon, Mr., iii. 140
Dingaan, iii. 82
Disraeli, Benjamin (afterwards Lord Beaconsfield), defeated at High Wycombe, ii. 43; member for Maidstone, 71; on education,

99; excluded from Peel's Cabinet, 119; and Corn Laws, 156, 157; Chancellor of Exchequer and leader of House of Commons, 196; on funeral of Duke of Wellington, 198; second budget, and debate with Mr. Gladstone, 201–2; and Government of India, 282; in opposition, 286; Reform Bill, 290; Derby-Disraeli Reform Bill, 335, 336, 339; Prime Minister, 334
—— and science, iii. 8; 1st Administration, 10; resignation, 13; 2nd Administration, 43, 45; Earl of Beaconsfield, 52; Congress of Berlin, 59; resignation, 70; death, 126
Disruption of Church of Scotland, ii. 112
Dissenters, disabilities, i. 13, 304
Dom Pedro, Emperor of Brazil, i. 283–5
Dominion of Canada, ii. 87, 341
Dominion of New Zealand, iii. 241
Don Carlos, ii. 173
Don Pacifico, ii. 176
Dongola, occupation of, iii. 267
Dost Mahomed Khan, ii. 124
Douro, passage of the, i. 127
Doyle, John, ii. 118
Dual Control, iii. 101
Dudley, Viscount (afterwards Earl), i. 319
Dufferin, Lord, iii. 107, 109, 121
Duffy, Charles Gavan, ii. 140
Dundas, Admiral, ii. 236
Dundonald, Lord, iii. 312
Dunwich, i. 217
Durham, Lord, resigns office, ii. 7, 27; and Brougham, 38; excluded from Lord Melbourne's Cabinet, 48; Ambassador to Russia, 58; High Commissioner for Canada, 81; dismissal, 84; death, 87
Dwelling-house legislation, ii. 22
Dynamite Campaign, the, iii. 143

East India Company, i. 71; ii. 281
Eastern Question revived, iii. 50
East and Equatorial Africa, iii. 257–8
Ecclesiastical Titles Bill, ii. 187, 189
Education Bill (1895), iii. 227
Education, national (1833–39), ii. 96; iii. 24
Education in Ireland, Royal Commission, ii. 97
Edwardes, Sir Herbert, ii. 205
Egypt, expedition to, i. 29; history and affairs of, iii. 97–124
El Teb, battle of, iii. 115
Elandslaagte, action of, iii. 303
Eldon, Lord (afterwards Earl of), Lord Chancellor, i. 7, 43, 63, 81, 176, 219, 245, 248, 281, 297, 303, 329; ii. 37, 54
Electric Telegraph invented, ii. 339
Elgin, Lord, mission to China, ii. 258, 260
Ellenborough, Lord, ii. 129, 132, 135, 289
Elliot, Captain, ii. 122
Elliott, Mr., Under-Secretary for Ireland, i. 6
Elphinstone, Gen., ii. 126; iii. 74
Ely, Marquess of, i. 8
Emancipation Bill, i. 315–8, 322
Emancipation of Catholics. *See* Roman
Emir Mahmoud, iii. 268
Emmett, Robert, i. 39
Employers Liability Act, iii. 145
Encumbered Estates Act, ii. 162; iii. 20
English Tithes Commutation Act, ii. 63
Erfurth, conference of, i. 109
Escurial, affair of the, i. 94
Espartero, General, ii. 173
Essays and Reviews, iii. 6
Established Church of Scotland, ii. 109
Eugénie, Empress, ii. 201
European coalition, third, i. 57
Evans, Colonel de Lacy, ii. 26
Eylau, battle of, i. 70

Factories Act Consolidation Act, ii. 21
Factories, Royal Commission on, ii. 19
Factory Acts (1819), ii. 16; (1844), 20
Factory Act Extension Act, ii. 21
Factory legislation, earliest, ii. 15
Factory and Workshops Act (1891), ii. 21
Farwell, Lieut., iii. 82
Fawcett, Mr. Henry, iii. 37, 39, 40
Federalism (Home Rule), ii. 148
Federals and Confederates, ii. 305
Federation of North American colonies, ii. 341; Bill, 342
Fenian Brotherhood, ii. 342; in Canada, 344; in England, 345; iii. 11
Ferdinand IV., King of the Two Sicilies, i. 267–8

Ferdinand VII., King of Spain, as Prince of Asturias, i. 95–7; accession to throne, 97; his policy, 266; revolution in Spain, 267; restoration of Bourbons, 277; summons conference to recover S. American colonies, 279
Ferdinand, Emperor of Austria, abdication, ii. 166
Ferozeshah, battle of, ii. 136
Field, Rev. Cyrus, ii. 340
Field tactics, French system, i. 100; Wellington's formation, 100
Fielden, Mr., ii. 20
Fiji Islands annexed, iii. 48
Financial crisis (1847), ii. 63
Finlay, Mr. George, ii. 176
Fitzgerald, Lord, ii. 130, 134
Fitzgerald, Vesey, appointed to Board of Trade, i. 308, 324
Fitzherbert, Mrs., i. 229
Fitzwilliam, Earl, i. 43, 219, 246
Flushing, expedition to, i. 137–8
Fontainebleau, Treaty of, i. 92
Ford, Patrick, iii. 143
Forster, Mr. W. E., iii. 24, 138, 140
Foster, John, Irish Speaker, i. 10
Fourth Party, iii. 130, 148, 152, 158
Fox, Charles James, on Pitt's resignation, i. 13; on Peace of Amiens, 30; in Opposition, 33, 42; excluded from Pitt's Cabinet, 43; in Opposition, 45–8; Foreign Secretary in Grenville's Cabinet, 63–5; death, 66; as an orator, 67; political principles, 67; last public utterance, on the slave trade, 187
Fox, Colonel, ii. 51
Fox, George, and slave trade, i. 186
France and Greece, ii. 177
Franchise Bill (1884), iii. 147, 149, 151
Francis Joseph, Emperor, ii. 166
Franco-German War, iii. 28 *et seq.*
Free Church, 1st Assembly, ii. 112
Free Church and United Presbyterians, ii. 109
Free Education Act (1891), iii. 209
Free Trade agitation, ii. 117, 153, 156, 159, 298, 300
Freemen in Boroughs, ii. 53
Freire, Dom Bernardim, Portuguese generalissimo, i. 104
French commercial treaty (1860), ii. 298
French Empire, restoration, ii. 200
French, Gen., iii. 303, 318, 329
French invasion threatened, i. 37, 46
French Revolution (1830), i. 328; (1848), ii. 165
Frere, Sir Bartle, iii. 84
Freycinet, M. de, iii. 103
Friedland, battle of, i. 70
Fuentes de Oñoro, battle, i. 153

Gambetta, M., iii. 102
Garibaldi, ii. 296
Garstin, Sir William, iii. 272
Gas Light and Coke Co. founded, iii. 283
Gatacre, Gen., iii. 309, 318
Gathorne-Hardy. *See* Cranbrook
Geneva Convention, ii. 247; Arbitration, 314
George III. and Roman Catholic Emancipation, i. 12–17, 80, 81; insanity, 14, 17, 43, 168; death, 227
George IV. as Prince of Wales, i. 64, 67; as Regent, 168–226; accession, 228; and Queen Caroline, 228 *et seq.*; and Mrs. Fitzherbert, 229; visits Ireland, 253, Scotland, 265; last illness, 327
Germany in S. Africa, iii. 251, 297; and Australian Colonies, iii. 254
Ghent, treaty of, i. 184
Giers, M. de, iii. 121, 123
Gladstone, William Ewart, member for Newark, ii. 56; on education, 99; position in 1841, 119; Secretary for Colonies, 154; and Mr. Disraeli, 202; war budget of 1854, 230; opposes Conspiracy to Murder Bill, 286; declines office, 287; Chancellor of Exchequer, 292; and independence of Italy, 293; and French Commercial Treaty, 299; budget of 1860, and paper duties, 300; and the Confederates, 311; and Radical party, 323; leader of House of Commons, 327; Reform Bill, 328
—— and orthodoxy, iii. 9; disestablishment of Irish Church, 12; 1st Administration, 13; and Ireland, 18; Army Purchase, 37; resigns and resumes office, 41; resignation, 43; Bulgarian atrocities, 53, 61; 2nd Administration, 70; resignation, 155; and Home Rule, 165, 172, 184, 192, 204, 206, 211; 3rd Administration, 171; resignation, 176; 4th Administration, 211; retires, 215; character, 218
Glencoe, action of, iii. 302
Glenelg, Lord, ii. 59, 77; iii. 247
Goderich. *See* Ripon
Godoy, M. de ("*Principe de la Paz*"), i. 94

Goodwin, Mr., iii. 6
Gordon, Gen., iii. 112–119
Gorst, Sir John, iii. 131, 149, 158, 227
Gortschakoff, Prince, ii. 223, 230; iii. 33, 57
Goschen, Mr. (afterwards Viscount), Chancellor of the Duchy, ii. 327; iii. 180, 209, 227
Gosford, Lord, ii. 78
Gough, Sir Hugh (afterwards 1st Viscount), ii. 123, 136, 205, 207
Goulburn, Mr. Henry, Chancellor of Exchequer, ii. 120
Government of India Bill, ii. 288
Graham, Sir James, ii. 111; iii. 25
Granger, Rev. James, ii. 13
Grant, President, ii. 314
Granville, Lord, ii. 292, 294; iii. 28, 31, 102, 106, 110, 126, 252
Grattan's Parliament, i. 3–4
Grävenitz, Countess, i. 247
Gray, Bishop, iii. 8
Great Britain, position in Europe, 1801, i. 20; economic distress, 22; army in 1801, 20, 28; in 1809, 119; corruption of public service, 123, 144, 209, 216, 306, 325; prosperity in 1811, 167, in 1815, 198; economic effects of peace, 1816, 200; revival of trade, 210; renewed depression, 214; agricultural depression, 256; Committee of Inquiry, 259; distress and disorder in 1829, 324
—— agitation against taxation, ii. 24; distress of labouring classes, 34, 91; commercial crisis, 331
—— prosperity, iii. 45; agricultural depression, 69
Great Exhibition (1851), ii. 183
Great Seal in commission, ii. 59
Great Trek, iii. 81, 245
Greece offers protectorate to Great Britain, i. 288; independence declared, 319–21; dispute with, ii. 176
Greek War of Independence, i. 271, 285 *et seq.*, 319
Greenwood, Mr. Frederick, iii. 48
Grenfell, Lord, iii. 266
Grenville, Lord, resigns with Pitt, i. 13; in Opposition, 41; refuses to join Pitt's Cabinet, 43; "All the Talents" Administration, 63–81; and the Regent, 169–75; on public meetings, 220; the "Delicate Inquiry," 231; retirement and death, 261
Grey, Charles (afterwards Viscount Howick, and later 2nd Earl Grey), and the Union, i. 6; declines to join Addington's Ministry, 33; opposes Pitt's foreign policy, 48–9; First Lord of the Admiralty in "Talents" Cabinet, 64; goes to House of Lords, 64, 143, 211; Foreign Secretary, 80; and the Regent, 169–75; and Reform party, 33, 261, 336; in Opposition, 220–31, 261, 276; First Lord of Treasury, 336; resigns, 341; recalled, 343
—— character of ministry, ii. 3, 23–24, 28, 34; Coercion Bill, 6, 24, 31; resigns, 32; declines to form a Cabinet, 47; declines office, 287
Grey, Lord de (afterwards Marquess of Ripon), ii. 148
Grey, Sir Charles, ii. 58, 178
Grey, Sir Edward, iii. 211
Grey, Sir George, ii. 199, 332; iii. 241
Grote, Mr. George, ii. 28
Ground Game Act, iii. 145
Guillotine resolution, iii. 187
Guizot, M., ii. 173

Habeas Corpus Act suspended, i. 204; renewed, 211; suspended, iii. 138
Halsbury, Lord, iii. 129
Hamilton, Lord George, iii. 136, 214
Hammond, Lord, iii. 28
Hammond, Mr. Hays, iii. 262
Hampden, Dr. Renn Dickson, ii. 105
Hanover, expedition to, i. 59; severed from Great Britain, ii. 66
Harcourt, Sir William Vernon, ii. 339; iii. 38, 214, 215
Hardinge, Sir Henry (afterwards Viscount), ii. 135, 204
Hardwicke, Earl of, Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland, i. 18
Hardy, Gathorne. *See* Cranbrook
Harris, Dr. Rutherford, iii. 263
Hart-Dyke, Sir William, iii. 170
Hartington, Marquess of (afterwards 8th Duke of Devonshire), ii. 291; iii. 47, 80, 171, 173, 175, 179, 209, 211, 226
Hatherton. *See* Littleton
Havelock, Sir Henry, ii. 273, 278, 279
Hawkesbury. *See* Liverpool
Haynau, Marshal, ii. 199
Head, Major Francis, ii. 78
Henley, Mr. Joseph, ii. 290
Herbert, Mr. Sidney, ii. 247
Herries, John Charles, Chancellor of Exchequer, i. 301; Master of the Mint, 303; ii. 196

Hertford, Marchioness of, i. 169, 175
Hewitt, Gen., ii. 266
Heytesbury, Lord, ii. 148
Hicks-Beach, Sir Michael (afterwards Lord St. Aldwyn), iii. 57, 84, 154, 157, 158, 182
Hicks Pasha, iii. 109, 110
Highton, Rev. Henry, ii. 339
Hill, Sir Rowland, ii. 94, 96
Hobhouse, Sir John Cam, ii. 25, 50
Hodson's Horse, ii. 276
Holkar of Indore, i. 73–8; ii. 280
Holland, Lord, i. 80
"Holy Alliance," manifesto of the, i. 269–71; interference with Spanish affairs, 274, 278; and Greece, 285
Holy places, dispute over the, ii. 148
Home Rule Movement, ii. 148; iii. 132 *et seq.*, 165 *et seq.*; 1st Bill, 173, 176; 2nd Bill, 211
Hope, Admiral, ii. 259
Hope, Sir John (4th Earl of Hopetoun), i. 29
Hopetoun, 7th Earl of (Marquess of Linlithgow), Governor of Australia, iii. 341
Hornby, Admiral Sir William, iii. 56
Horner, Francis, death, i. 211
Horsman, Edward, ii. 115, 328
Houses of Parliament burned, ii. 44
Housing of Working Classes Act, ii. 22
Howick, Lord, ii. 80
Howley, Archbishop of Canterbury, ii. 99
Humanitarian impulse, ii. 13
"Humanity" Martin, ii. 13
Hume, Joseph, ii. 70, 80, 188
"Hundred Days," the, i. 189
Hunt, "Orator," i. 203
Huskisson, William, and the Tory party, i. 63; and the Corn Bill, 298; and the Goderich Cabinet, 302–3; resigns with Canningites, 307; death, 331
Hutchinson, John Hely, Lord (2nd Earl of Donoughmore), commands in Egypt, i. 29; in Opposition, with Carlton House party, 146; and Queen Caroline, 240, 243
Huxley, Prof., iii. 4, 27
Hyde Park Riot, ii. 332

Ibrahim Pasha, i. 285, 291
Iddesleigh (Sir Stafford Northcote), Lord, ii. 301; iii. 45, 127, 152, 157, 181
Illumination, modern improvements, iii. 283
Imperial Light Horse, iii. 298
Income (property) tax repealed, i. 31; re-instituted, 210; imposed by Peel, ii. 120; repeal promised by Gladstone, iii. 42
India, British, government, i. 71–9
India Company, ii. 281
Indian Mutiny, ii. 258, 262–80
Ingilby, Sir William, ii. 25
Inglis, Brigadier John, ii. 277
Inkermann, battle of, ii. 240
"Invincibles," the, iii. 144
Ireland, penal laws, i. 1; policy of William Pitt, 1 *et seq.*; condition in 1783, 2; Roman Catholic Franchise Act of 1793, 3; rebellion of 1798, 3; Protestant party in, 3; constitution of Protestant Parliament, 4; legislative union with England, 4, 5–9, 19; political corruption, 7; in 1803, 39; Emmett's rising, 39; O'Connell and the Clare election, 308, 322; disorder in 1829, 323
—— in 1832, ii. 1 *ff.*; in 1842, 140 *ff.*; crime in 1847, 164; famine in, 161
—— in 1868, iii. 11, 18; Home Rule Movement, 131 *ff.*, 165, 173, 211; in 1880, 131–145; Charles Stewart Parnell, 132 *ff.*, 153, 159 *ff.*, 188, 202; in 1886, 182
Irish Church Bill, ii. 5, 28; iii. 13, 18; disestablishment, ii. 324
Irish Arms Act (1842), ii. 142
Irish "Coercion Acts," ii. 24, 31; iii. 22; (1881), 138
Irish Coercion Bill (1833), ii. 6, 24, 31
Irish Corporations Bill (1835), ii. 61
Irish Education, Royal Commissions on (1806, 1824), ii. 97
Irish Land Acts (1881), iii. 163; (1887), 184
Irish Land Bill (1870), iii. 21
Irish land-tenure (1847), ii. 146
Irish Land Law Bill (1881), iii. 138
Irish Land Purchase Act (1885), iii. 163; (1889), 207
Irish Republican Brotherhood, iii. 135
Irish Tithes Bill, ii. 30, 51, 62
Irish University Bill, iii. 39
"Iron Duke," the, ii. 196
Isabella, Queen, ii. 173
Isandhlana, iii. 86
Ismail Pasha, iii. 100
Italy, independence of, ii. 293; unification, 297

Jamaica, slave trade, ii. 8; political disturbances, 89
James of Hereford, Lord, iii. 146, 171, 226
Jameson raid, the, iii. 261
Jefferson Davis, Pres., ii. 307
Jena, battle of, i. 70
Jennings, Mr. Louis, iii. 201
Jews, disabilities of, i. 305, 326; removal, ii. 291
"Jingoism," iii. 57
John VI., King of Portugal, i. 92, 93, 283
Johnson, Pres. Andrew, ii. 344
Johnstone, Brigadier, ii. 268
Joint Commission (Afghanistan), iii. 121
Joint Note (Egypt), iii. 102
Jordan, Mrs., i. 327
Joseph Buonaparte, King of Spain, i. 98, 101, 154, 155, 160, 161
Joubert, Gen., iii. 92, 299, 319, 332
Journalism, modern, iii. 287
Jowett, Dr., iii. 6
Joyce murders, iii. 142
Jung Bahádur, ii. 279
Junot, Maréchal, Duc d'Abrantés, i. 93, 104 *et seq.*

Kaffraria, iii. 246
Kaffre Wars, iii. 246–7
Kars, ii. 254
Keble, John, ii. 103
Kent, Duchess of, marriage, ii. 68
Kent, Duke of, ii. 65, 69
Key, Sir John, ii. 25
"Khaki election," the, iii. 340
Khalifa, the, iii. 270
Khartoum, siege, iii. 115–8; recapture, 269
"Khedive," iii. 100
Kilmainham Treaty, iii. 140, 143
Kimberley, Lord, iii. 91
Kimberley, mines, iii. 248
Kimberley, relief of, iii. 331
"King's Friends" Administration, i. 17, 18, 33
Kitchener, Lord, iii. 267, 318, 336
Knox, Gen., iii. 335
Knutsford, Lord, iii. 196
Koch, Professor, ii. 21
Kofi Kalkali, King of Ashantee, iii. 44, 246
Komarow, Gen., iii. 121
Kossuth, Gen., ii. 191
Krüger, Pres. Paul, iii. 83, 92, 249, 251, 259, 292, 297, 335–6
Kydd, Samuel, ii. 16

Labouchere, Mr. (afterwards Lord Taunton), ii. 341
Labouchere, Mr. Henry, iii. 129, 216, 265
Labour legislation, ii. 14–22
Ladysmith, iii. 302, 304, 310, 320, 326, 328, 329
Laing's Nek disaster, iii. 92
Lambert, Commodore, ii. 209
Land Acts (Irish), iii. 163, 184, 207
Land League of Ireland, National, iii. 134, 170, 203
Lansdowne, 3rd Marquess of, i. 64, 301
Lansdowne, 5th Marquess of, iii. 136
Lawrence, Sir Henry, ii. 204, 277
Lawrence, Sir John (afterwards Lord), ii. 204, 268, 270; iii. 71, 73
Lay Patronage, abolished in Scotland, iii. 47
Leopold, King of the Belgians, i. 239; ii. 69
Leopold, Prince of Saxe-Coburg, ii. 174
Leopold, Prince of Hohenzollern-Sigmaringen, iii. 28
Lewis, Sir George, iii. 191
Leyds, Dr., iii. 264, 297
"Liberal," term first used, ii. 4
"Liberal-Unionists," the, iii. 175
Lichfield, Lord, ii. 93
Lieven, Princesse de, i. 289
"Light Brigade," Charge of the, ii. 238
Ligny, battle of, i. 192
Lincoln, Pres., ii. 305
Lister, Sir Joseph (afterwards Lord), iii. 289
Literature, modern, iii. 286
Littleton, Mr. (Lord Hatherton), ii. 4, 30, 32, 33, 36, 48
Liverpool, Earl of (as Lord Hawkesbury), Foreign Secretary, i. 23, 32, 48, 63, 82; Secretary for War in Perceval's Ministry, 142; and Peninsular campaign, 146; First Lord of the Treasury, 176; second administration, 227; and Queen Caroline, 240; coalition with Grenvillites, 261; last illness, 293; and Catholic Relief Bill, 294
Lo Bengula, iii. 251, 255
Local Government Act (1888), iii. 198
Loch, Sir Henry (afterwards Lord), ii. 260; iii. 255
Locomotion, modern, iii. 275
London Conference (1864), ii. 320; (1870–71), iii. 35
London, Convention of, iii. 293
London County Council, iii. 199
London, Treaty of, i. 290, 319

Long, Col., iii. 312
Lords and Commons, prerogatives, ii. 303
Lords, House of, iii. 228
Loughborough, Lord, i. 12
Louis XVIII., i. 189, 196, 274, 328, 329
Louis Napoleon in London, ii. 169; President, 175; *coup d'état*, 189; Emperor, 169, 293, 330
Louis Philippe, i. 329; and the Spanish Marriages, ii. 173; flight, 175
Lowe, Mr. Robert (Viscount Sherbrooke), ii. 328; iii. 25, 41, 50
Lucan, Lord, ii. 238
Lucknow, siege of, ii. 277; second defence, 279
Luddite riots, i. 201
Lugard, Lady, iii. 263
Lunéville, Peace of, i. 21
Lyndhurst, Lord, i. 341; ii. 74
Lyons, Lord, ii. 307
Lyttelton, Gen., iii. 328
Lytton, Lord, iii. 72, 77

M'Adam, Mr. J. L., iii. 276
Macarthur, Mr. J., iii. 238, 243
M'Carthy, Sir Charles, iii. 44
M'Carthy, Mr. Justin, iii. 203, 205
Macaulay, Thomas Babington, Lord, Secretary for War, ii. 114, 121; Paymaster of the Forces, 161; loses his seat (1847), 163
Macaulay, Zachary, and slave trade, ii. 8, 13
M'Cullagh-Torrens, Mr., ii. 22
Macdonald, Maj.-Gen. Sir Hector, iii. 319
Macdonald, Mr., iii. 191
Mack, Gen., i. 58
Mackinnon, Sir William, iii. 257
Macmahon, Gen., ii. 293
Macnaghten, Sir W., ii. 126
Macquarie, Col. L., iii. 237, 243
Madison, Pres., i. 184
Mafeking, relief of, iii. 333
Magdala, siege of, ii. 347
Magenta, battle of, ii. 293
Magersfontein, battle of, iii. 307
Mahdi (Mohammed Ahmed), the, iii. 109, 120, 122, 266
Maida, battle of, i. 69, 100
Maitland, Sir Peregrine, iii. 82
Maiwand, disaster at, iii. 78
Majuba, disaster at, iii. 93
Malekoff, Duc de, ii. 287
Malet, Sir Edward, iii. 108–9
"Malignants," the, i. 326
Malmesbury, 3rd Earl of, ii. 287
Malt tax, ii. 25
Malta, affairs of, i. 22, 30, 32, 72
Mamlûks, massacre of the, iii. 98
Manchester Railway opened, i. 331
Manners-Sutton, Sir C. (afterwards Viscount Canterbury), ii. 4, 45
Maori War, iii. 241
Marconi and wireless telegraphy, iii. 282
Marhattá wars, i. 73, 77
Marlborough and Wellington, i. 190
Marlborough, 7th Duke of, iii. 69
Marmont, Maréchal (Duc de Raguse), i. 58, 153–7
Marriage and Registration Acts, ii. 63–4
Martin, R. ("Humanity"), ii. 13
Martineau, Miss Harriet, i. 273
Mashonaland annexed, iii. 255
Masséna, Maréchal (Prince of Essling), i. 148, 153
Matabeleland annexed, iii. 256
Maxwell, Sir Benson, iii. 108
Maynooth Grant, ii. 150
Mazzini, ii. 283
Meerut, revolt at, ii. 265
Mehemet Ali, i. 285
Melbourne, Lord, forms Ministry, ii. 33; dismissal, 37; 2nd Administration, 47; insecurity, 57, 74; and Queen Victoria, 71, 118; resigns and resumes office, 85; resigns, 90; recalled, 91; defeat and dissolution, 117; resigns, 118
Melville, Henry Dundas, 1st Viscount, i. 12; proceedings against, 49; impeachment, 51
Menelek, King, iii. 267
Menou, Gen., i. 29
Menschikoff, Prince, ii. 223, 232 *ff.*
Methodists, the, iii. 2
Methuen, Gen. Lord, iii. 305
Metternich, Prince, i. 286; ii. 166
Midlothian Campaigns, iii. 69, 70, 165, 210
Milan Commission, i. 239, 240
Militia Bill, ii. 195
Mill, John Stuart, ii. 282, 325
Milner, Lord, iii. 295, 298, 336
Ministries: Pitt's, i. 1–13; Addington's, 13–43; Pitt's last, 44–62; Grenville's, 63–81; Portland's, 81–142; Perceval's, 142–73; Liverpool's, 176–294; Canning's, 294–300; Goderich's, 301–2; Wellington's, 302–336; Grey's, 336–44
—— Grey's, ii. 1–33; Melbourne's, 33–39; Wellington's Provisional, 39, 40; Peel's, 40–47; Melbourne's second, 47–118; Peel's second,

118–159; Russell's, 159–195; Derby's, 195–202; Aberdeen's, 217–42; Palmerston's, 243–87; Derby's second, 287–91; Palmerston's second, 292–327; Russell's second, 327–31; Derby's third, 331 *ff.*; Disraeli's first, 334
—— Disraeli's first, iii. 10–13; Gladstone's first, 13–43; Disraeli's second, 43–70; Gladstone's second, 70–155; Salisbury's first, 157–170; Gladstone's third, 171–176; Salisbury's second, 176–211; Rosebery's, 215–220; Salisbury's third, 226 *et seq.*
Miranda, Gen., i. 97
Missolonghi, siege of, i. 286
Mitchel, John, ii. 170
Mitford. *See* Redesdale
Modder River, iii. 329
Moira, Earl of, i. 64, 175
Molesworth, Sir Wm., ii. 82
Moncrieff, Sir C. Scott, iii. 108
Monkswell, Lord, ii. 311; iii. 38
Monroe Doctrine, i. 280
Monson, Col., i. 77
Monteagle. *See* Spring-Rice
Montgomery, Commissioner Robert, ii. 270
Moodkee, battle of, ii. 136
Moore, Capt. Graham, captures Spanish treasure-ships, i. 48
Moore, Sir John, i. 29, 45; expedition to Sweden, 90; to Portugal, 102; character and policy, 102, 111; Spanish campaign, 111–18; death at Coruña, 117
Morley, Lord, iii. 171, 211
Morley, Mr. S., iii. 27
Mornington. *See* Wellesley
Moselekatze, iii. 82
Motor traffic, iii. 279
"Mountain," the, i. 141, 144, 212, 231, 326
Mountmorris, Lord, iii. 186
Muhammad Ali, iii. 98
Mulgrave, Lord, ii. 51, 140
Mulráj, ii. 204
Municipal Corporations Bill, ii. 52, 53
Murat, Gen., i. 96 *et seq.*
Murdock, Robert, iii. 283
Murray, Lady Augusta, i. 240
Murray, Sir George, i. 91, 161, 308; ii. 70; iii. 36
Murray, Sir John, i. 163

NÁNÁ Sáhib (Sirik Dandhu Panth), ii. 271
Nankin, Treaty of, ii. 124
Napier, Lord, ii. 122
Napier, Admiral Sir Charles, ii. 207
Napier, Sir Charles James, ii. 132, 207
Napier, Sir Robert, ii. 346
Napoleon Bonaparte, and conquest of Europe, i. 20 *et seq.*; treaty of Amiens, 30; elected First Consul, 32; prepares to invade England, 45; declared Emperor, 46; Austrian campaign, 58; Prussian campaign, 70; revives Continental system, 79; designs on Spanish monarchy, 95 *et seq.*, 181; abdication, 165; escape from Elba, 189; invades Belgium, 191; second abdication, 195; captivity, 196
Napoleon III., ii. 200, 293
Natal, iii. 82; invaded by Boers, 299; recovered, 334
National Debt, i. 199; iii. 178
National defences (1852), ii. 255, 266
National education, ii. 96
National Land League, iii. 134, 170, 203
National Schools Society, ii. 98
Navarino, battle of, i. 292
Navigation Act (Cromwell's), i. 176
Navy in 1853, ii. 228
Nelson, Horatio, Lord (afterwards Viscount), appointed vice-admiral, i. 20; Baltic expedition, 23; battle of Copenhagen, 25; expedition to West Indies, 52; sails for Cadiz on *Victory*, 54; battle of Trafalgar, 54; death, 55
New Guinea, iii. 254
New South Wales, iii. 236
Newcastle, Duke of, Secretary for War and Colonies, ii. 229; resigns, 243
Newman, John (afterwards Cardinal), ii. 103, 106; secession to Rome, 107, 186
Ney, Maréchal, i. 189, 191
Nicholas I., Tzar of Russia, i. 288; ii. 220 *ff.*
Nicholson, Brigadier John, ii. 274
Nightingale, Miss Florence, ii. 246
Nivelle, battle of the, i. 164
Nolan, Capt., ii. 238
Nonconformity, iii. 1 *et seq.*
Non-Importation Act, i. 178
Normanby, Lord, Secretary for Colonies, ii. 85; transfer to Home Office, 89; British Minister in Paris, 190

Northbrook, Lord, ii. 116; iii. 71
Northcote. *See* Iddesleigh
Norton, Hon. Mrs., ii. 119
Nott, Gen., ii. 126, 130

O'Brien, Smith, ii. 171
O'Connell, Daniel, i. 309, 322; and the Clare election, 310
—— passive resistance, ii. 2; and Tithes Bill, 4, 30, 36; excluded from Lord Melbourne's second Administration, 48, 49; and Repeal, 49, 50; dubious duel, 50; crusade against House of Lords, 54; Carlow election, 55; and the Chartists, 92; loses seat in Dublin, 117; Year of Repeal, 138; prosecution, 144; loss of influence, and death, 145
O'Connell, Morgan, duel with Lord Alvanley, ii. 51
O'Connor, Feargus, ii. 167
O'Donnell, Mr., iii. 189
O'Shea, Capt., iii. 140, 302
Old Sarum, i. 217
Omdurman, battle of, iii. 269
Opium trade, ii. 122
Orange River Territory conquered, iii. 82; federated with Transvaal, 293; re-annexed, 333; federation in Union of S. Africa, 336
"Orator" Hunt, i. 203, 216
Orde, Thomas, i. 3
Orders in Council, i. 80, 176, 181, 185
Origin of Species, Darwin's, iii. 3
Orsini, ii. 283
Osman Digna, iii. 266
Ossington, Lord (Mr. Denison), ii. 72
Oudh, ii. 212; annexation, 215, 270, 282
Outram, Sir James, ii. 132, 214, 288, 278
Owen, Prof. Richard, iii. 4
Owen, Robert, and the Factory Act, ii. 16
Oxford Movement, the, ii. 132

Paardeberg, battle of, iii. 329, 331
Pakenham, i. 185
Pakington, Sir John, ii. 336
Palmer. *See* Selborne
Palmerston, Henry John Temple, 3rd Viscount, Foreign Secretary, i. 64, 297, 301, 308, 331
—— ii. 23, 50, 51, 58, 161; career and return to Foreign Office, 172; indiscretions, 175, 178; dismissal, 191; Kossuth, 191; Home Office, 218, 226; resigns, 227; 1st Administration, 243, 252, 257, 283; resignation, 287; 2nd Administration, 292; and Napoleon III., 297; death, and character of his Ministry, 325–7
Panmure, Lord (Fox Maule), ii. 111; at the War Office, 243, 266
Papal aggression, ii. 185
Paper duties, ii. 300, 304
Papineau, Louis Joseph, ii. 78, 83
Paris, Convention of, i. 196, 198
Paris, Treaty of (1784), iii. 292; (1856), ii. 254
Parker, Admiral Sir Hyde, i. 23
Parkes, Sir Harry, ii. 256, 260
Parliamentary Reform, agitation for, i. 217, 306; Peel on, 225, 261, 332, 335 *et seq.*
Parnell, Mr. C. S., iii. 132, 139, 153, 160, 161, 182, 188–9, 192, 202, 206
Parnell Commission, the, iii. 189, 192
Pattison, Rev. Mark, iii. 6, 7
Patton, Mr. Wilson, ii. 19
Paul II., and Napoleon, i. 20; assassination, 27
Paull, James, i. 79
Paxton, Sir Joseph, ii. 184
"Peace with Honour," iii. 60
Peel, Gen., ii. 335; iii. 36
Peel, Sir Robert (1st Baronet), ii. 15
Peel, Mr. (afterwards Sir Robert), on Parliamentary Reform, i. 225; declines India Board, 260; accepts Home Office, 261; Tory policy, 281; leader of House of Commons, 303; and Roman Catholic claims, 310; co-operates with Wellington, 313; and democracy, 330; institutes police force, 333
—— and Conservative party, ii. 4; and Factory legislation, 20; and Commission of Inquiry into Irish Church, 30; attitude in opposition, 37; 1st Administration, 40; resigns, 47; Municipal Corporations Bill, 53; and Queen Victoria, 71; Conservative Opposition and Radical overtures, 82; forms Cabinet, 90; Bedchamber question and dismissal, 91; Prime Minister, 118; budget of 1842 and Corn Laws, 120, 152, 180; Irish policy, 148; resigns, 154; resumes office, 154–5; resigns, 159; last debate and death, 179; character, 180
Peel, Mr. Speaker (afterwards Lord), iii. 129, 137, 212

" Peelers " (" Bobbies "), i. 333
Peking, siege of, ii. 261
Penal Laws in Ireland, i. 1
Peninsular War, outbreak of, i. 91 ; treaty of Fontainebleau, 92, 96 ; the French invade Portugal, 91 ; flight of Portuguese Court to Brazil, 93 ; Napoleon's design on Spanish monarchy, 95 ; Spanish rising, 97 ; Sir Arthur Wellesley commands first Peninsular expedition, 98 ; battle of Rio Seco, 101 ; Spanish successes and flight of Joseph Bonaparte, 101 ; arrival of General Spencer and Sir J. Moore, 101–2 ; of Sir H. Dalrymple and Sir H. Burrard, 103, 104 ; Wellesley's operations in Portugal, 104 ; battle of Roliça, 104 ; of Vimeiro, 105 ; Convention of Cintra, 106 ; Moore's campaign, 111 ; arrival of Napoleon, 113 ; capture of Madrid and retreat of Moore, 115 ; battle of Coruña and death of Moore, 116–7 ; treaty between Great Britain and Spain, 117 ; second expedition to Peninsula, 123 ; Wellington in command, 125 ; Talavera campaign, 126 ; passage of Douro, 127 ; expulsion of French from Portugal, 128 ; British army enters Spain, 129 ; battle of Talavera, 132 ; Wellington retreats on Badajos, 135 ; arrival of Masséna, 148 ; Wellington retires on Torres Vedras, fall of Ciudad Rodrigo, 150 ; third French invasion of Portugal, and battle of Busaco, 151 ; French evacuate Portugal, 153 ; battle of Fuentes de Oñoro, 153 ; battle of Albuera, 153 ; second abdication of King Joseph, 154 ; storm of Ciudad Rodrigo, 155, of Badajos, 156 ; battle of Salamanca, 157 ; allies enter Madrid, 158 ; retreat from Burgos, 159 ; Vittoria campaign, 160 ; battle of Vittoria, and rout of French army, 161–2 ; Soult resumes the offensive, 163 ; Murray's disaster, 163 ; Wellington invades France, 164 ; battle of the Nivelle, 164, of Toulouse, 165 ; abdication of Napoleon, 165
Peninsular army broken up, i. 182
Pennefather, Col., iii. 255
Penny Post, ii. 93 ; Conservative opposition, 95
Pepys, Sir Christopher (afterwards Lord Cottenham), ii. 60
Perceval, Spencer, Chancellor of Exchequer and leader of House of Commons, i. 82, 122 ; First Lord of Treasury and Chancellor of Exchequer, 142 ; retained by the Regent, 170 ; assassination, 173 ; character, 173–4 ; defence of Queen Caroline, 231
Perponcher, Gen. de, i. 191
Persigny, Count, Ambassador to England, ii. 284 ; recalled, 287
Peterloo Riots, i. 218, 263
Petty, Lord Henry. *See* Lansdowne
Phœnix Park murders, iii. 141, 144
Phonograph, Edison's, iii. 282
Photography, iii. 284
Pigott, Richard, iii. 191
Pitt, William, Prime Minister, i. 1 ; Irish policy, 1 *et seq.* ; views on Catholic Emancipation, and the Union, 2 ; resigns, 13–15 ; and Addington's Ministry, 13 ; and the king's insanity, 14 ; abandons the Catholics, 15 ; in retirement, 31 ; Warden of the Cinque Ports, 31, 37, 45 ; his conduct debated on, 31 ; relations to Tierney, and duel, 35, 212 ; alienation from Addington, 35, 41 ; proposes joint Cabinet, 43 ; First Lord of the Treasury, 44 ; reconciliation with Addington, and second rupture, 49 ; proceedings against Lord Melville, 49 ; last public utterance, 55–6 ; third European coalition, 56 ; death, 59 ; character of administration, 60–62 ; and the Navigation Act, 177 ; Orders in Council, 178 ; the slave trade, 186
" Plan of Campaign," the, iii. 182
Plowden, Mr., ii. 346
Plumer, Col., iii. 333
Plunket, Lord, ii. 60
Pole-Carew, Gen., iii. 308
Police force instituted, i. 333
Polignac, Prince de, i. 279, 329
Political corruption, i. 7, 216, 306
Pollock, Gen., ii. 131
Ponsonby, Mr. George, i. 143–4, 211
Poor Law, Act of 1796, ii. 33 ; Reform in 1832, 34
Portland, 3rd Duke of, First Lord of the Treasury, i. 81, 83
Portugal, in 1807, i. 91 ; invasion by France, 93 ; Court escapes to Brazil, 93 ; French expelled, 128 ; third French invasion, 151 ; eva-

cuated, 153; revolution, 267; second revolution and loss of Brazil, 283
Postal Reform, ii. 94–96
Potato disease, ii. 152
Presburg, Peace of, i. 69
Presbyterian Establishment in Scotland, ii. 108
Pretoria, surrender of, iii. 334
Pretoria, Treaty of, iii. 292
Pretorius, Gen., iii. 82, 92
Primrose, Gen., iii. 78
Prince of Wales (King Edward VII.), birth, ii. 118; marriage, 318
Prinsloo's commando, iii. 336
Protectionists, ii. 156, 160, 196
Protestant Parliament of Ireland, i. 3–4; and the Union, 5
Public meetings, right of, i. 219
Public service, corruption, i. 123, 144
Pulleine, Col., iii. 86
Punjab, ii. 135–7; annexation, 207
Pusey, Dr. Edward Bouverie, ii. 104, 106

Quakers and the slave trade, i. 186
Quatre-Bras, battle of, i. 192
Queen's Colleges, Ireland, ii. 150
Queensland, iii. 209, 254

Radical party, ii. 50, 74, 81; vote of censure, 82
Radical Press, prosecution of, i. 207
Raglan, Lord, commander in Crimean War, ii. 228, 230; censure passed on, 240; death, 247; character vindicated, 247, 250
Ramnuggur, battle of, ii. 206
Rani of Jhansi, ii. 280
Raphael, Mr., ii. 55
Redan repulse, ii. 246
Redesdale, Lord, i. 18, 39
Redistribution Bill, iii. 151
Redmond, Mr. John, iii. 23, 203
Reform Act of 1832, i. 9; ii. 1 *ff.*
Reform, agitation for Parliamentary, i. 217, 306, 332, 335 *et seq.*
Reform Bill, Pitt's (1785), i. 7; Lord John Russell's first Bill, 338; second and third Bills, 340; carried, 343; Disraeli's (1859), ii. 290; Gladstone's (1866), 328; Derby-Disraeli (1867), 335–9; Gladstone's (1884), iii. 147, 149, 151
Reform League, ii. 332
Regency, the, i. 168–241
Reitz, Pres., iii. 281
Repealers, the, ii. 49, 50, 51, 74, 138, 140
Revolution of 1830, i. 328; of 1848, French, ii. 165
Rhine Confederation, i. 70; dissolved, 164
Rhodes, Mr. C. J., iii. 248, 261, 265, 296
Rhodes, Col. F., iii. 262
Rhodesia, iii. 256
Rio Seco, battle of, i. 101
Ripon (F. J. Robinson, Viscount Goderich), 1st Earl of Ripon, i. 298; First Lord of Treasury, 301; resignation, 302; Secretary for War and Colonies, 336; Lord Privy Seal, ii. 11; resigns office, 28; President of Board of Control, 134
Ripon, 2nd Earl (created Marquess of), Viceroy of India, iii. 77–79
Ritchie, Lord, iii. 198
Roberts, Lord, iii. 74, 79, 274, 313, 319 *et seq.*
Robinson, Mr. F. J. *See* Ripon
Robinson, Sir Hercules (Lord Rosmead), iii. 94, 95, 250, 261
Roebuck, Mr., ii. 70, 80, 120, 163, 178, 187, 242, 254, 285; iii. 25
Roliça, battle of, i. 104
Roman Catholic claims for Emancipation, i. 2, 3, 6, 10; Pitt's support, 12; feeling in favour of, 176, 293–4, 306, 311–8
Roman Catholic disabilities, in Ireland, i. 1; military, 80; ii. 1
Roman Catholic Emancipation carried, i. 318; effects in Ireland, 322
Roman Catholic Franchise Act, Pitt's of 1793, i. 3, 311; Castlereagh's Relief Bill, 294; Wellington's Emancipation Bill, 311–18; carried, 318
Romilly, Sir Samuel, i. 211, 231
Rorke's Drift, iii. 87
Rose, Mr. H. J., ii. 103
Rosebery, Lord, iii. 154, 211, 215, 218, 316
Rouher, M., ii. 299
"Round Table Conference," iii. 185
Royal Commission on Education in Ireland, ii. 97; iii. 25
Royal Prerogative, iii. 38
Royal Titles Act, iii. 49
"Rubios," the, i. 101
Rudd, Mr., iii. 251
"Rupert of Debate" (14th Earl of Derby), i. 336; iii. 10, 16
Russell, Lord John (afterwards 1st Earl), i. 304, 336; introduces Reform Bill, 338, 340

Russell, Lord John, in Grey's Cabinet, ii. 23, 37; leader of Opposition, 45; marriage, 50; leader of House of Commons, 50; Secretary for Colonies, 85; proposed scheme for education, 95; converted to Anti-Corn-Law principles, 153; 1st Administration, 160; on papal aggression, 186; defeated on Reform Bill and resigns, 188; resumes office, 189; resigns, 195; Foreign Secretary and leader of House of Commons, 217; resigns Foreign Office, 221; retires from office, 242; Foreign Secretary, 292; last Administration, 327; resigns, 330
—— last Administration, iii. 10
Russell of Killowen, Lord, iii. 191
Russell, Mr. Odo. *See* Ampthill
Russia and Greece, ii. 177
Russia and Turkey, i. 285, 288; ii. 219 *ff.*; war declared, 223; Crimean campaign, 227–251; war with Turkey, iii. 56–60
Russian Note of 1870, iii. 33

Sadler, Michael Thomas, ii. 17
Saïd Pasha, iii. 100
Saint-Aldwyn. *See* Hicks-Beach
Saint Arnaud, ii. 229, 232–3
Salamanca, battle of, i. 157
Sale, General (afterwards Sir Robert), ii. 129, 136
Sale, Lady, ii. 128, 131
Salisbury, Lord Cranborne, afterwards 3rd Marquess of, ii. 355; iii. 16, 43; Foreign Secretary, 59, 156; 1st Administration, 157, 161; resignation, 170; 2nd Administration, 176–180; resignation, 211; 3rd Administration, 226, 230
Sandon, Lord, ii. 82
San Stefano, treaty of, iii. 58
Savings Bank Acts, i. 208 *et seq.*
Scarlett, Gen., ii. 237
Schönbrunn, treaty of, i. 146
School boards instituted, iii. 27
Schouvaloff, Count, iii. 59
Scindia of Gwalior, ii. 280
Scotland, attempted rising, i. 224
Scotland, Church of, ii. 108
Scotland, famine in west of, ii. 162
Sebastopol, siege, ii. 233, 235–49
Selborne (Sir Roundell Palmer), Lord, ii. 314; iii. 14
Sepoys in revolt, ii. 262, 267
Seymour, Admiral Sir Beauchamp, iii. 104
Seymour, Sir Michael, ii. 258
Shaftesbury (Lord Ashley, aft.) 7th Earl of, Factories Bill, ii. 18, 20; dwelling-house legislation, 22; on education, iii. 24
Shannon and *Chesapeake*, affair of the, i. 181
Sheep-farming in Australia, iii. 238
Shelton, Brigadier, ii. 126, 131
Shepstone, Sir Theophilus, iii. 83
Sherbrooke, Robert Lowe, Lord, ii. 328
Sher Ali, iii. 71
Sheridan, Richard Brinsley, on Peace of Amiens, i. 30; in Opposition, 33, and the Regent, 169
Sibthorpe, Col., ii. 50
Sicily, British occupation of, i. 69; revolution in, 267
Sidmouth, Viscount. *See* Addington
Sikh War, first, ii. 135, 204; second, 204–5
Sikhs, loyalty in Indian Mutiny, ii. 269
Silk trade in England, i. 324
Simpson, General Sir James, ii. 245, 247; resigns, 249
Simpson, Sir James, invention of chloroform by, ii. 180
Sind, conquest of, and annexation, ii. 132–4
Sindhia of Gwalior, i. 73–8
Sinecures, abolition of, i. 123, 145, 209, 325
Sirik Dandhu Panth (Náná Sáhib), ii. 271
"Six Acts," Castlereagh's, i. 221, 263
Slave trade, suppression of, i. 182, 186–7; abolition, ii. 7
Smith, Mr., and disabilities of Dissenters, i. 304
Smith, Sir Harry, ii. 136; iii. 82, 247
Smith, John, and the slave trade, ii. 10
Smith, Sir Lionel, ii. 89
Smith, Sydney, on Penny Post, ii. 95
Smith, Mr. W. H., ii. 325; iii. 27, 58, 60, 158, 170, 175, 180, 208
Sobraon, battle of, ii. 137
Soimonoff, Gen., ii. 230
Solferino, battle of, ii. 293
Soudan revolt, iii. 109, 120, 122; reconquest, 266
Soult, Marshal, in Spain, i. 113, 115, 134; in Portugal, 126; recalled, 160; return to Spain, 163; iii. 313

South African Republic, iii. 83, 94
South Africa, Union of, iii. 336
South American States, i. 275–82
South Australia, iii. 339
Spain, position of, i. 94; Napoleon's designs on, 95; Peninsular War, 97 *et seq.*; affairs discussed at Congress of Vienna, 274; war declared, 277 *et seq.*
Spanish-American colonies, i. 277; recognition of independence by Great Britain, 282
Spanish Revolution, i. 267
Spanish rising of 1808, i. 97
Spanish Marriages, the, ii. 173
Spanish throne vacant, iii. 28
Spencer, Gen., in Peninsular War, i. 101
Spencer, 2nd Earl, resigns office, i. 13; declines to join Pitt's Cabinet, 43; in "All the Talents" Cabinet, 64; and the "Delicate Inquiry," 230
Spencer, 5th Earl, iii. 141, 215
Spion Kop, battle of, iii. 323
Spragge, Col., iii. 333
Spring-Rice, Mr. (afterwards Lord Monteagle), ii. 29, 30, 37, 93, 95
Stanhope, Mr. Philip, iii. 317
Stanhope, Rt. Hon. Edward, iii. 195
Stanley. *See* Derby
Stanley, Miss, ii. 247
Steam Navigation, iii. 280
Steamships first used in war, ii. 123
Stephens, James, ii. 344
Stewart, Col., iii. 109, 111–13, 117
Stewart, Lord (3rd Marquess of Londonderry), i. 268
Stewart, Major-Gen. Donald, iii. 74
Steyn, Pres., iii. 295
Stockmar, Baron, ii. 118
Stormberg, reverse, iii. 310
Stratford de Redcliffe, Lord, i. 290, 320; ii. 58, 77, 221, 225
Strathnairn, Lord, ii. 280
Stuart, Sir John, i. 69, 73, 137
Suez Canal, purchase of shares, iii. 48; construction, 100
Sugden, Sir Edward, ii. 59, 141
Sumner, Bishop, i. 260
Surgery, modern, iii. 288
Sussex, Duke of, i. 240
Sweden, Treaty of, i. 90; Expedition to, 90
Sydenham, Lord (Poulett Thomson), ii. 85, 87
Symons, Gen. Sir Wm., iii. 302
Talavera campaign, i. 126; battle of, 132
Talleyrand, correspondence with Fox, i. 65
Tálukdárs, the, ii. 212
Tamworth manifesto, the, ii. 41, 70
Tantia Topi, ii. 272, 273, 280
Tasmania, iii. 240
Taxation, ii. 24; iii. 42
Tel-el-Kebir, iii. 105
Temple, Archbishop, iii. 6
Temple-Cowper clause, iii. 26
Telegraph, invention of electric, 339
Telephone invented, iii. 252
Ten Hours Act, ii. 20
Tenants' Compensation (Ireland) Bill, ii. 151
Test and Corporation Acts repealed, i. 304
Tewfik Pasha, iii. 101, 108
Textile industry, decline, i. 201, 324
Theodore, King of Abyssinia, ii. 345
Thirlwall, Bishop, iii. 16
Thistlewood, Arthur, i. 203, 222–4
Thorneycroft, Brig.-Gen., iii. 324
Tientsin Treaty, ii. 259; ratified, 261
Tierney, George, duel with Pitt, i. 35, 212; Treasurer of Navy, 35; in Opposition, 143, 220; Master of Mint, 301; death, 326
Tilsit, treaty of, i. 84–5
Times, the, in 1854, ii. 241; and Parnell, iii. 188
Tipú, Sultan of Mysore, i. 72
Tissot, M., iii. 106
Tithe Rent Charge Recovery Act, ii. 63
Tithes Bill, Littleton's, ii. 30
Tithes Commutation Act, ii. 63; Irish do., 51, 62
Todleben, Col. de, ii. 233
Toleration Act, iii. 1
Torres Vedras lines, i. 148
"Tory," disuse of name, ii. 4
"Tory-Democrat" party, iii. 153
Toulouse, battle of, i. 165
Tracts for the Times, ii. 103
Tractarian Movement, iii. 2
Trafalgar, battle of, i. 54
Transportation Act repealed, ii. 218
Transvaal, affairs in the, iii. 82, 84, 89, 91; revolt and election of Provisional Government, 91; independence granted, 94; Convention of Pretoria, 94; Convention

of London, 94, 292 *ff.*; discovery of diamonds, 248; of gold, 250; the Uitlanders, 259, 293; Jameson raid, 261; Krüger elected President, 292; federation with Orange Free State, 293; Bloemfontein Conference, 295; Krüger's ultimatum, 299; war, 299–336; annexation, 336
Treaty of Ackermann, i. 320
Treaty of Amiens, i. 17, 30
Treaty, Arbitration, with United States, iii. 234
Treaty, Commercial, with France, ii. 298
Treaty of Ghent, i. 184
Treaty between Great Britain, France, and Russia, i. 290
Treaty between Great Britain and Spain, i. 117
Treaty between Great Britain and Sweden, i. 90
Treaty of Paris, ii. 254; iii. 32
Treaty of Schönbrunn, i. 146
Treaty of Tientsin, ii. 259
Treaty of Tilsit, i. 84
Treaty of Zurich, ii. 295
Trent affair, ii. 307
Trevelyan, Sir George, iii. 26, 154, 171, 172, 186–7, 210
Trevor, Capt., murder of, iii. 127
Troppau and Laybach, Congress of, i. 268
Tryon, Admiral Sir G., iii. 212
Turkey and Greece, i. 285, 319; the "Sick Man," ii. 219; war with Russia, 223; iii. 56
Turkish atrocities, i. 291

Uitlanders, the, iii. 259, 293
Ulundi, battle of, iii. 87
Union between England and Ireland, Act of, i. 5–9
United Presbyterians, ii. 109
United States declare war on Great Britain, i. 181, 183; Arbitration Treaty, iii. 234

Vaccination, iii. 289
Valuation Act (1854), iii. 198
Van Diemen's Land, iii. 240
Vansittart, Nicholas, i. 23, 210, 215
Venezuelan boundary dispute, iii. 233
Vernon Harcourt. *See* Harcourt
Victoria, H.M.S., loss of, iii. 213
Victor Emmanuel, King of Italy, iii. 297
Victoria, Queen, attains majority, ii. 65; accession, 67; betrothal, 115; marriage, 116
—— and Irish Church Bill, iii. 16; Empress of India, 49; the Royal prerogative, 150; Jubilee, 195; Diamond Jubilee, 273; visit to Ireland, 340; illness and death, 341; character of her reign, 343–4
Vienna, Congress of, i. 188; meets at Verona, 272
Vierkleur, the, iii. 323, 337
Villeneuve, Admiral, i. 52
Villiers, de, Sir Henry, iii. 94
Vimeiro, battle of, i. 105
Vittoria, battle of, i. 161
Volunteer movement (1803), i. 37–38; (1859–1906), ii. 298

Wagram, battle of, i. 135
Walcheren, campaign of, i. 137; inquiry, 144
Walewski, Comte, French Minister in London, ii. 190, 199, 255, 284, 296, 299
Walpole, Spencer, ii. 290, 332, 334
Walsh, Abp., iii. 191
Warburton, Mr. Henry, ii. 95
Ward, Henry, ii. 28
Ward, W. G., ii. 106
Warren, Gen. Sir Charles, iii. 321
Washington, Treaty of, ii. 312
Waterloo, battle of, i. 193
Watkin, Sir E., iii. 280
Wauchope, Brig.-Gen. Andrew, iii. 307
"Waverers," the, i. 341
Weardale, Lord, iii. 266
Wellesley, Sir H. (Lord Cowley), i. 157, 287
Wellesley, Richard, Marquess (Lord Mornington), Governor-General of India, i. 71; resigns, 77; proceedings against, 79; in Spain, 135; and Canning, 141; succeeds Canning as Foreign Secretary, 142, 180; hostility to Perceval, 171; is superseded by Castlereagh, 173; fails to form Ministry, 174
—— Irish Coercion Bill, ii. 31; resigns Lord-Lieutenancy, 51
Wellington (Sir Arthur Wellesley), Duke of, as a youth, i. 120; in Flanders, 28, 74; in India, 74; Irish Secretary, 82, 98, 107, 111, 125; expedition to Copenhagen, 87; despatched on first Peninsular expedition, 97; system of

field tactics, 100; operations in Portugal, 101, 104; Convention of Cintra, 106; indignation of Great Britain and Court of Inquiry, 107; commands second Peninsular expedition, 125; Talavera campaign, 126; drives French out of Portugal, 128; relations with Cuesta, 129; enters Spain, 129; battle of Talavera, 132; peerage and pension, 143; falls back on Torres Vedras, 148; fall of Busaco, 151; storm of Ciudad Rodrigo and Badajos, 155; battle of Salamanca, 157; siege of Burgos, 158; retreat along the Douro, 159; sixth campaign, and battle of Vittoria, 160; invades France, 164; Wellington's policy, 165–6; created Duke, 182; ambassador to Paris, and the slave trade, 182, 188; at Congress of Vienna, 188; Commander-in-Chief in Belgium, 189; comparison with Marlborough, 190; Waterloo, 193; commands Army of Occupation, 196; joins Liverpool Cabinet, 212; policy, 213; attitude towards reform, 225; advocates Canning's appointment to Foreign Office, 265; Congress of Vienna (Verona), 272; Spanish policy overruled, 274; attitude to South American States, 281; to Portuguese revolution, 283; and Nicholas I., 288; waning influence, 294; distrust of Canning, 295; resigns office of Commander-in-Chief, 296; the Corn Bill, 298; resumes command of army, 301; Prime Minister, 302; emancipation policy, 311; duel with Lord Winchilsea, 317; estimate of Wellington's home and foreign policy, 319; relations with William IV., 328; Bourbon sympathies, 329; dread of democracy, 330; fall of Ministry, 334; death of Duchess of Wellington, 339; Reform Bill, 340, 342

—— attitude in Opposition, ii. 26, 35, 371; and Poor Law Reform, 35; forms Provisional Administration, 39; and Peel, 40; summoned by Queen Victoria, 90; and the Corn Laws, 153, 157; and the Chartists, 168; death, 197; character of the Iron Duke, 197; funeral, 198–9

Wessels, Gen., iii. 305

West Australia, iii. 240

Western, Mr. (afterwards Baron Western of Rivenhall), i. 259

Wet, General C. de, iii. 330, 333 *et seq.*

Wetherell, Attorney-General, dismissed, i. 316

Whately, Archbishop, ii. 105

Wheatstone, Charles, ii. 339

Wheeler, Sir Hugh, ii. 271

Whish, Gen., ii. 206

Whitbread, Samuel, opposes Pitt, i. 49; in opposition to Perceval, 143; attacks Lord Liverpool, 182, 189; promotes Duke of Wellington's pension, 182; suicide, 211, 240; attitude towards the Princess of Wales, 232

White, Gen. Sir George, iii. 298, 310, 314, 319

Whitelocke, Gen., i. 88

Whitworth, Lord, i. 34

"Who-who" Ministry, ii. 196

"Widow's Mite," the, ii. 50

Wilberforce, William, and Lord Melville, i. 49–50; policy, 63; on Greek War of Independence, 271; and the slave trade, 186, 220; ii. 7; on public meetings, i. 220; motion *re* Queen Caroline, 247

Wilberforce, Bishop, iii. 6

William IV., i. 327; marriage, 328; and the Irish Church, ii. 28; last days and death, 65; character, 66; and the Duchess of Kent, 69

William, Prince (afterwards German Emperor), in exile in England, ii. 166

Williams, Dr. Rowland, iii. 6

Willoughby, Sir John, iii. 262

Wilmot, Sir Eardley, and slave trade, ii. 12

Wilson, Brigadier Archdale, ii. 268, 274

Wilson, Sir Charles, iii. 118

Wilson, Rev. H. B., iii. 6

Wilson, Sir Robert, 252

Winchilsea, Earl of, duel with Duke of Wellington, i. 317

Window tax, ii. 25

Wingate, Sir Reginald, iii. 270

Wireless telegraphy, iii. 282

Wiseman, Cardinal, ii. 186

Wolff, Sir H. Drummond, iii. 128, 131, 149, 158, 227

Wolseley, Lord, iii. 4, 87, 91, 105, 117

Wood, Alderman Matthew, i. 244

Wood, Field-Marshal Sir Evelyn, iii. 87, 94, 108
Wood, Sir Charles, ii. 161, 163, 164
Woodgate, Gen., iii. 323
Workshops Regulation Act, ii. 21

Year of Repeal, ii. 140
Yeh, Governor, ii. 255, 259
York, Duke of, Commander-in-Chief, i. 121; the Clarke scandal, and resignation, 121; reinstated, 170; funeral, 298
Young Ireland party, ii. 143, 170
Young Turks, ii. 220
Yule, Gen., iii. 303

Zanzibar, iii. 257
Zobeir Pasha, iii. 113
Zulu War, iii. 81, 89
Zurich, Treaty of, ii. 295

EMENDENDA ET CORRIGENDA

VOL. I.

Page 44, in first line of footnote.—For "1804" read "1788."

P. 64, *l.* 29.—After "Tory" insert "except Ellenborough."

P. 64, *l.* 2 of first footnote.—For "re-election" read "election," and after "Cambridge" insert "University."

P. 64, *l.* 3 of first footnote.—Leave out from "appointment" to "Exchequer," and insert, "the death of Pitt."

P. 80, *l.* 27.—For "Ford" read "Fox."

P. 86, *l.* 30.—For "Brooke Taylor" read "Brook Taylor."

Pages 95 *and* 96.—For "Frederick, Prince of the Asturias" read "Ferdinand, Prince of Asturias."

P. 165, inset, *l.* 4.—For "1804" read "1814."

P. 203, *l.* 17.—For "Thistleton" read "Thistlewood."

P. 208, *l.* 8.—For "Abbot" read "Abbott."

P. 212, *l.* 6.—For "Speaker Abbot" read "Speaker Addington."

P. 227, *l.* 7 from bottom.—For "1688" read "1689."

P. 255, *l.* 15.—For "Secretaries of State" read "Ministers."

P. 265, *l.* 23.—For "spleuchan" read "sporran."

P. 280, inset, *l.* 3.—For "1824" read "1823."

P. 290, first line of second footnote.—For "Nephew" read "Cousin."

P. 296, *l.* 24.—Leave out "the previous year," and insert "January."

P. 306, *l.* 29.—For "Liverpool" read "Birmingham."

P. 309, *l.* 2.—Leave out "his challenging Peel," and insert "Peel having challenged him."

P. 313, *l.* 4 from bottom.—Leave out from "where" to "defeat."

P. 322, *l.* 10 from bottom.—For "Hunt" read "Hurst."

P. 329.—Leave out first footnote.

P. 336.—Leave out "drew the Duke of Richmond," and insert "included the Tory Duke of Richmond and drew."

VOL. II.

Page 45, *l.* 5.—For "Place" read "Palace."

P. 47, *l.* 18.—After "begging" insert "him."

P. 48, *l.* 15.—For "those" read "others."

P. 50, *l.* 30.—For "Sibthorpe" read "Sibthorp."

P. 52, *l.* 7 from bottom.—For "Aldborough" read "Aldeburgh in Suffolk."

P. 55, *l.* 19.—Leave out "a certain"; after "Raphael" insert "Sheriff of London."

P. 61, *l.* 6.—For "formally" read "virtually."

P. 61, *l.* 7.—Leave out from after "though" to "House" in *l.* 9, and insert "it was not until 1st July that they crossed the House and seated themselves in opposition."

P. 61.—Leave out second footnote.

P. 63, *l.* 15.—For "requisite" read "requisites."

P. 66, third line of footnote.—For "Windsor" read "Osborne."

P. 68, *l.* 13.—After "Marquess" leave out "of."

P. 85, leave out from "when" in *l.* 19 to "on" in *l.* 22, and insert, "but on the."

P. 88, *l.* 6.—For "Lieutenant-General" read "Lieutenant-Governor."

P. 89, *l.* 3 of text, after "Empire" insert "[1]" Insert as footnote "[1] Normanby, not proving a success at the Colonial Office, exchanged posts in August with the Home Secretary, Lord J. Russell."

P. 89, at bottom.—Alter reference of footnote [1] to [2].

P. 93, *l.* 13.—Leave out "Sir T." and insert "Thomas"; after "Phillips" insert "earned a well-deserved knighthood by making a gallant stand against the rioters."

P. 93, *l.* 14.—Leave out from "made" to "rioters" in line 15.

P. 93, *l.* 20.—Before "had dawned" insert "there."

P. 112, last line of first footnote.—For "True" read "Cauld."

P. 122, *l.* 4 from bottom.—For "Viceroy" read "Governor-General."

P. 126, *l.* 7.—For "1842" read "1841."

P. 129.—Footnote, last line but two: leave out "consisting only of members of the Cabinet" and insert "which, indeed, was a Board only in name, as the Board of Trade is now."

P. 131, *l.* 15.—For "Robert" read "Richmond."

P. 136, *l.* 15.—For "upon" read "through."

P. 137, *l.* 16.—For "of" read "from."

P. 139, *l.* 10.—Leave out "his face" and insert "the trades-unions in Dublin."

P. 155, *l.* 5.—Leave out from "and" to "Woodstock" in *l.* 7.

P. 166, *l.* 12.—For "Jellalich" read "Jellachich."

P. 167, *l.* 16.—For "1841" read "1840."

P. 171, *l.* 16.—Leave out "Lord Inchiquin's brother" and insert "brother of Sir Lucius O'Brien (who became Lord Inchiquin in 1855)."

P. 188, *ll.* 13 and 15.—For "country" read "county."

P. 203, *l.* 8 from bottom.—For "1844" read "1845."

P. 204, *l.* 3.—Leave out "persuaded" and insert "endeavoured to persuade."

P. 204, *l.* 4.—Leave out from "until" to "him" in line 5, and insert ", but Dalhousie declined to do so. In 1848, however, he accepted."

P. 211, *l.* 23.—For "1854" read "1853–4."

P. 225.—In second footnote, leave out "nephew" and insert "cousin."

P. 256, *l.* 8 from bottom.—After "unjust war" insert "[2]" and footnote "[2] Sir John Bowring (1792–1872) had a long record as a militant Radical. Perhaps his chief claim to distinction consists in his success in persuading Parliament to adopt the florin as a first step to introducing the decimal system into the British Empire."

P. 258, last line.—For "their" read "its."

P. 259, *l.* 8 from bottom.—After "Bruce" insert "Elgin's brother."

P. 266.—In first line of fourth footnote, for "Albert" read "Consort."

P. 274, *l.* 26.—For "Reid" read "Thomas Reed."

P. 275, *l.* 7.—For "Hagara" read "Hazara."

P. 279, *l.* 28.—For "Wyndham" read "Windham."

P. 287, *l.* 10.—After "from" insert "Lord Grey, nor yet from": leave out "Lord Grey" "Gladstone"; after "Newcastle" insert "Sidney Herbert, Graham, Cardwell."

P. 289, *l.* 17.—After "Canning" insert, "and published it."

P. 292, *l.* 7 from bottom.—After "Exchequer" insert "This was all the more notable because, unlike the other Peelites, Gladstone had supported the Derby administration, speaking against Russell's amendment to the Reform Bill, and voting against Hartington's motion of no confidence."

P. 293, *l.* 14.—For "and driven" read "driving."

P. 312, *l.* 29.—For "Montague" read "Mountague." In first line of second footnote, for "Derby" read "Stanley, who by this time had succeeded as 15th Earl of Derby."

P. 316, *l.* 4 from bottom.—For "1872" read "1862."

P. 336, *ll.* 9 and 10.—Leave out "of Crystal Palace renown."

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